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CARIBOU ZIP.

CHAPTER I.

THE HISS OF THE SERPENT.

"WHAT you tell me, Cecile, only goes to prove that I was right. Trouble is brewing—the woods are full of sign—so plain, too, that a blind man could read them, one would think. And yet—what will be the result? It does not need a prophet to read that. Before yonder moon reaches its full, blood will flow, scalps will be taken, the lakes will be swept clear of all Posts; and why? Simply because we have a purblind, obstinate, pig-headed man placed over us, who is too proud and wise—God save the mark—to take advice from true-born scouts and wood-rangers!"

"And *is* he so blind?"

"Blind! Listen: you know that I have just come up from the Detroit country—I and my brother Joseph. Well, I told Major Etherington that Pontiac and his braves had at last fairly thrown away their peace-mask, and had dug up the hatchet. He laughed at me, and said that I was frightened at my own shadow! But I thought of you, and I choked down the hot words that rose to my lips; and I had Joseph sent for. He told the same story, of course, but it was received like mine. He was no Indian; why should *his* word be taken before that of an entire tribe? The Grand Sauten had been to the Post that morning, and had smoked the pipe of everlasting peace. And our wise chief listened to his lying voice as though it were the singing of birds instead of the serpent's hiss, preparing for a strike!"

"He thought *you* were scared—lying!" echoed the maiden, in a tone of voice that told how deep and perfect was her trust in the young scout.

"Yes—and I could say nothing, because I am under his command; he would call it insubordination—and I have no very great yearning to fall victim to a drum-head court-martial. And then he dismissed us, swearing that he would send prisoner to Detroit the next person who should disturb the fort with such idle tales!"

"I fear his eyes will be opened when it is too late," thoughtfully added Cecile. "I think I see now what Jean Blanc meant, this morning—"

"I don't like him—that Jean Blanc," interrupted the scout, a little sharply. "If the Indian tradition is true, that fellow was a snake before he was made a man. And then, he comes here too often—I have heard more than once as rumor that he was to wed Francois Boucher's daughter."

"But you did not believe it, Zip—you knew me too well for that," simply replied Cecile, drawing still closer to the young scout. "But look! father is calling for me—I must go."

"First—what did Blanc say?"

"I only caught a few words. He said that father must keep close to the cabin, and see that I did not leave his sight. Then he gave him something that looked like a string of wampum, saying that no Indian would dare molest us while we kept the belt. Father asked him when the blow was to be struck, but I did not catch the answer."

"Well, Joseph is watching Jean Blanc. I set him on the rascal's trail, and we may manage to foil his plans yet. But now, good-night; I will look for you here at the same time to-morrow."

Again the voice was heard calling Cecile, and the maiden gently released herself from the young scout's warm embrace, and glided away through the shrubbery that concealed the little cabin from the trysting tree.

It was with strangely mixed feelings that Zip turned and threaded the forest, and so deep buried in his thoughts was he, that he took little heed of the course he was pursuing. Yet, so perfect was he in his craft, that only the faintest rustle of the decaying leaves, or an occasional snapping twig betrayed his passage.

It was the night of the 3d of June, 1763, warm and sul-

try. At that moment the savage plans were being perfected—the hour set that should see the uprising of the Ojibwas and the Sacs, and witness the downfall of Michilimackinac.

Though not expecting the blow to fall so soon, the young scout felt that it could not long be delayed. His words to Cecile Boucher showed that. Yet his warnings were received with contempt, and even threats of disgrace should they be repeated. Little wonder then that he was ill at ease.

Zephaniah Graham was a native of New York; was born of poor parents, on the estate of Sir William Johnson. His parents died early, but the baronet took an interest in the lad, taking him into his own family, and educating him with his children. But young Graham could not bear restraint, and spent by far the greater portion of his time ranging the wilderness in company with his Indian friends, and by their training he became an expert woodsman, nearly perfect in the craft that was afterward to render his name celebrated along the entire border. But above all else he was noted for his swiftness of foot and endurance. One instance may be given illustrating this, as, through it be received the *sobriquet* by which the reader will know him.

At a gathering of the Mohawks, where all were privileged, to boast of their deeds or prowess, Graham said that he had, upon bare ground, ran down a bull moose and killed it with his knife. A visiting chief refused to believe this, and the result was Graham and the chief staked their horses and weapons, the ownership in them to be decided by the result of an attempt to repeat the feat. A party was made up and after no little difficulty a full-grown *caribou* buck was captured in a surround, and while held by stout cords, was marked upon the hoofs and horns, then turned loose. Stripped nearly to the skin, bearing only a short knife and a bag of parched corn, Graham set off in hot pursuit. Though distanced at first, he kept the trail, and on the *ninth day*—having hardly closed his eyes for sleep during that period—he *fairly ran the caribou down*, and captured it alive.*

* That the reader may not think this altogether romance, I would state that a similar feat has been performed in the West. Two celebrated runners—one white, the other an Indian—agreed to test their respective en-

From this circumstance he gained the name of "Caribou Zip," by which he was afterward so well and widely known.

In the fall of '63, Graham and Joseph Brant, afterward so celebrated as Thayendanegea, abandoned their studies and wandered to Detroit. Caribou Zip joined a company of scouts, and was assigned to Michilimackinac, then commanded by Captain (some authorities say *Major*) Etherington. Scenting war in the air, young Brant remained around the fort, though too proud to place himself beneath a commander, as his sworn friend and brother had done.

During one of his scouts, Caribou Zip came upon the cabin of Francois Boucher, a Canadian, and at first sight fell in love with Cecile, the settler's daughter. But the poet's words proved true in this case, for, though Cecile soon yielded her heart's love to the handsome, athletic scout, old Boucher frowned upon him, even forbidding him the house, and reading Cecile many a lecture upon her folly in fancying herself in love with the wild scapegrace. As a result, the lovers met clandestinely.

This much is necessary for the proper understanding of what is to follow.

Caribou Zip had wandered further into the forest than he thought, while deep buried in thought, and instead of returning to the fort, as he had intended, when he roused from his reverie, he found himself full naff a dozen miles away from his quarters.

A tiny, star-like point of light caught his eye, glancing through the bushes, and in an instant he was once more the cunning, wide-awake scout. Feeling that the white inhabitants of the lake settlements slumbered over a mine that might be exploded at any moment, Zip never allowed his suspicions to sleep, and improved every opportunity by which definite knowledge of the plot might possibly be gained.

"It's a red-skin fire—since pale-faces would have no business in these woods—and there can be no harm in taking a look at the party," Graham muttered, crouching low down
durance and skill, by chasing upon foot, a band of elk, the leader of which was marked by a broken horn. The Indian gave out on the eighth day; the white man ran down the elk on the tenth day. This is well authenticated and both names and place can be given if desired.

and gliding through the shrubbery with a celerity and skill that was almost marvelous.

Not a rustling leaf, not a crackling twig betrayed his passage; the subtle serpent, the velvet-footed panther could not have crept upon their prey with more skill. Caribou Zip was *born scout*.

In a few moments he had gained a position from whence he could peer out upon the little glade, in whose center glowed the fire that had attracted his attention. Crouching down behind the scrubby bush, Caribou Zip drank in the scene with eager eyes, feeling that he was upon the brink of an important discovery.

He could see that this was a council; and from its being held away from the Indian village, deep in the heart of the forest, he knew that it was a *secret council*, where none but chosen chiefs might speak or listen. This fact, added to what he had already gleaned concerning Pontiac's plot at Detroit, prepared Caribou Zip for what was to follow.

A dozen chiefs and prominent braves were already gathered around the fire, quietly smoking, as if awaiting the arrival of some person. Several of these chiefs Zip recognized; others he knew to be Ojibwas and Sacs, from their style of dress and manner of wearing their hair.

Scarcely had the scout time to notice these points, when a peculiar signal broke the silence, coming from almost directly behind him. Half believing himself discovered, Graham turned swiftly, but seeing nothing, remained still. Then a light footfall met his ear, and two figures bounded rapidly past him, entering the glade.

The signal was echoed back from a dozen different points, surrounding the glade, and then followed by a different note. Though at a loss to understand the meaning of this, Caribou Zip fully realized his situation. He knew that he was within a cordon of sentinels, whose duty it was to prevent the council from being spied upon, and if the assembled chiefs were gathered to plot against the pale-faces, to be discovered as an eavesdropper would be nothing less than death.

Still, Caribou Zip did not once doubt what course he should pursue. It was his duty as well as inclination to gather all the tidings he could, nor was this feeling weakened when he

recognized in the smaller one of the two last arrivals, no less a personage than the Canadian trader, Jean Blanc, who had made pretensions to the hand of Cecile Boucher.

"Let me get a hold on the rascal—that's all!" muttered Zip, his eyes flashing ominously. "He's slippery as an eel; but I'll hold him *then*!"

The council was now opened, since the prime mover in it—Le Grande Sauter himself—had arrived. Not a word or motion escaped the keen-eyed scout, but I do not intend boring the reader with a recapitulation of all the ceremonies of the occasion, since they were the same as have been described scores of times.

There was little beating round the bush, little of the fanciful and flowery speeches that are usually delivered in council, but each speaker plunged at once into the subject, giving his opinion in a few sententious words. From this Caribou Zip gathered that this meeting was merely for the deciding vote, which should set the hour for the uprising.

Le Grande Sauter spoke first. His voice was for immediate action. A runner had brought word that the Ottawas of L'Arbre Croche were arming their braves to attack "Great Turtle"; should they—the Ojibwas and Sacs—delay, the plunder would have to be shared with the Ottawas. And there were many warriors to each white scalp now, without waiting for others to come up.

Jean Blanc, a small, fox-like man, with a long, thin, cruel-looking face, next arose, and "spoke his piece." He said that the Indians would have to deal only with the English; that he would keep the French and Canadians quiet spectators. Not one of them would raise a hand to defend the English, or to resist their red brethren.

Other speakers followed, giving their opinions; but all agreed that the blow must be dealt *at once*. Jean Blanc arose again and said:

"Brothers, I am only a fox; but a fox is not a fool. It sees many things that a big man would overlook. It has long ears, too, and can hear good. Listen to what a fox has heard.

"To-morrow is a big day with the English. Why? Because it is the return of the day on which their Great Father

across the salt lake was born. It is the day when all his children lay aside their duties and play the children. Then, to-morrow is the best time for you to take their scalps. They will not be looking for danger. They will have their eyes shut close. The soldiers will lay aside their guns and long knives, the better to play.

"Brothers, listen to me. To-morrow let the English know that you are going to play *baggattaway*—let the Ojibwas challenge the Sacs. Let your squaws and papposes come to see the game; but let them all wear blankets to hide the weapons they must carry. Then, when Le Grande Sauteur gives the signal, let each brave seize his weapons and strike the English.

"Brothers, the Fox has spoken!"

Jean Blanc sat down with a satisfied air. He could see that he had greatly risen in the estimation of the savages, by his brief speech. In it he had cleared a path for an easy victory over the hated English.

Caribou Zip had listened intently to every word, and though he missed several points through his imperfect knowledge of the Ojibway dialect, he had gathered a fair idea of the plot. He saw that it was a subtle and deep-laid one, and feared greatly that it would succeed, knowing as he did the peculiar obstinacy of the commander of the fort.

"I'd best be going—they'll break up soon, and I wouldn't like to be caught here. I must pass the sentinels," muttered Graham, tightening his belt and securing his rifle.

The night was unusually clear and still. Though the rays of the moon were interrupted by the trees above, yet a subdued light sifted through the foliage, rendering objects indistinctly visible. Thus it was no easy task that lay before the young scout, since the sentinels were hidden from him, and being stationary, would be apt to hear the slightest mis-step or noise, even should the scout choose a point between the posts for his passage. True, he might succeed in passing them uncaught, by making a bold rush for it, but this he did not wish to try, since it would tell the Indians their plot had been overheard, and it was better to play the game with one's opponent's cards "upon the table," than have to face an unknown hand.

With these reflections, Caribou Zip cautiously stole away from the glade, and using the utmost care, succeeded in gaining a point fully one hundred yards from the council. But there he made the first false move.

He was passing between two bushes, and had parted them, holding them aside with his hands. Just as he was carefully easing them back into place, a twig snapped and the bush swayed upright.

A quick, guttural exclamation told Graham that this noise had been heard by some watchful savage, and he crouched down in the shade, one hand upon his knife. The low exclamation had been cut short, and he had failed to place it. Whether it had come from in front or to one side, he could only conjecture. No other sound followed to direct him, for several seconds.

Then he firmly held his breath and listened. From directly in front, he heard footsteps, and at the same instant, like an echo, he distinguished the cat-like tread of another person approaching his covert from the rear. His acute, trained senses told him that were he to remain still, the two Indians would either pass close beside him or else meet at his covert. In either case discovery was almost inevitable, since the pale moonlight shimmered down over the bushes beside him.

As carefully as possible, Graham slung his rifle over his shoulder, and drew his knife. The footsteps behind him had ceased, but those in front were still plainly audible. Yet, strain his eyes as he might, he could not catch a glimpse of the sentinel.

"Maybe I can creep to one side, and give them the slip that way," thought Zip.

No sooner said than attempted, for a moment's delay might be fatal. Yet, exercise his skill as he might, he could not help but make some rustling that sounded terribly distinct to his ears. It seemed as though he must be discovered at every step.

A low signal sounded in his ears, so close beside him that the scout could not help giving a slight start, and turning his head, he distinguished the head and shoulders of an Indian, not two yards distant, the glittering eyes riveted upon

him, shining through the gloom with the phosphorescent glare of a wild beast's orbs.

At the same instant, an answering call came from beyond, in reply, and the savage gave a little start, bending his head forward as if to recognize the dusky figure. He uttered a few low words in a dialect that Graham did not understand.

Though so many signals had been made, they were uttered in such a subdued tone as to be heard at only a few yards, and the chiefs in council had heard nothing of them. Possibly had the sentinels been aware of the real facts, they would have acted different. But, as it was, each red-skin imagined the noise to have been made by one of his comrades, in changing his station, since it came from *within* their lines.

Caribou Zip did not know this, and believing himself discovered, he leaped upon the sentinel, dealing him a deadly blow with his knife, at the same time clutching at his throat with one hand. The stroke was deadly, and the vise-like grip effectually stifled the faint cry that rose to the sentinel's lips; but still sufficient noise was made to alarm the nearest sentinel.

He—the same who had replied to the dead brave's calls—darted forward with ready weapons, yet making no outcry, as it would not be wise to interrupt the council by a false alarm. He caught a glimpse of the two figures as they went down together, Graham's foot slipping as he supported the weight of the limp corpse. He caught sight of the fur cap upon the scout's head, as a ray of moonlight crossed it, and raised his hatchet, uttering the wild yell of alarm.

A dull, heavy blow followed, and a death-gurgle was mingled with the cries and signals that now filled the air, and a second lifeless form fell to the ground. But it was that of the sentinel, not Caribou Zip.

A tall, lithe figure had glided forward, anticipating the red-skin's hatchet with a stroke that cleft the Ojibwa's skull like an apple.

"Quick—the wolves are afoot!" muttered this man, in a clear whisper, as he bent over the young scout.

"That you, brother?" gasped Zip, in surprise; but as he

distinguished the yells of alarm, and heard the rapid tread of his enemies approaching, he sprung erect, and added: "Run then—to the fort—we must get there *first!*"

Without further words the man whom he had called brother—though he was an Indian—darted away through the forest, running with a speed that was little short of marvelous, when one considered the tangled nature of the ground and the little noise he made. Caribou Zip pressed close to the Indian's heels, and when the Indians had found the dead bodies of their friends, the footfalls of the fugitives had died away in the distance.

Still it was plain that their council had been spied upon, and as the English were their only enemies, it was but reasonable to suppose the eavesdroppers came from the fort. Desiring at all risks to keep their plans a secret until after the blow had been dealt, Le Grande Sauteur dispatched his swiftest runners at once to the settlement, with orders to stop any persons who might attempt to enter, coming from the woods.

But, unfortunately for his plans, he had to deal with cunning scouts as well as the two swiftest runners in the lake regions, and the brothers entered the fort long before the Indians reached it. And yet by the way Caribou Zip had had time to hear his friend's story.

As he had told Cecile, Graham had set Joseph Brant, or Thayendanegea, to watch Jean Blanc. Brant had faithfully performed this mission, and in doing so had followed him to the council, thus forming the second eavesdropper. At the time he was ignorant of the vicinity of Caribou Zip, but when the latter turned to creep away, the Mohawk recognized him. Fearing to make himself known then, lest a start or exclamation might betray them, he followed on with the result already stated.

On entering the fort, Graham at once proceeded to lay his discovery before Captain Etherington. His report was listened to coldly enough, for the officer had taken an unaccountable dislike to the young scout, nor did the confirmation given by Brant change his views. He laughed at the idea of danger, calling them visionary dreamers, frightened at their own shadows.

• Why, the chiefs were here to-day, and even renewed their treaty of peace. This is sheer nonsense, and I will not listen to any more of it. I warned you before, Graham, and repeat that warning now, if you bring any more such nonsensical reports to me, I'll send you in irons to Detroit. Go now, and see if you can keep a still tongue. Don't let me hear that you have been trying to frighten the men with your cock-and-bull stories. You understand me."

"I'll go—and I hope that *you* will be the only one to suffer from your foolhardy notions," angrily replied Graham.

"No insolence—go! or I'll put you under guard!" roared Etherington.

Disgusted with this reception, the brother scouts sought their quarters. But little sleep visited their eyelids that night. They were thinking of the morrow and all it was to bring forth.

CHAPTER II.

THE GAME AND ITS SEQUEL.

THE 4th of June, 1763. A day memorable in the annals of the border as witnessing the fall of Fort Michilimackinac. How different might have been the result, had not the commander placed greater confidence in the savages than he did in his own scouts and spies. His eyes were opened to a sense of his folly—if not worse—only when it was too late.

The day dawned clear, warm and sultry. A salute was given in honor of the king—it being the birthday of King George of England—and then, after being mustered upon the parade-ground, the soldiers and hunters were told that they were their own masters for the remainder of the day. This announcement was greeted with cheers, and the men broke ranks, laying aside their weapons and for the most part their stiff uniforms, then proceeded to enjoy their holiday with all the clamor of schoolboys. Little did they dream

how soon their sun of life was to set behind a river of blood—that the knives and hatchets were already sharpened and thirsting for their lives.

Encamped in the woods not far off was a large party of Ojibwas, strengthened by several bands that had reached the rendezvous since sunset. Not far distant from this temporary village, a goodly number of Sac Indians from the Wisconsin River, had erected their lodges. These Indians mingled freely together, seemingly upon the best of terms, and fairly swarmed around the fort, though as yet none of them had ventured to attempt an entrance, unless specially invited by some of the officers. It was this respectful demeanor that rendered Etherington so confident. As he said, the savages were in force enough to crush all opposition at a blow, if they wished it, and the best way to keep them friendly was to trust them wholly.

A true scout could have taught him better. An Indian tribe exults more over a single scalp taken from an enemy without loss to themselves, than over a score where lives are lost on *both* sides.

This was why Minavarana, or Le Grande Santeur, concluded to make use of the stratagem suggested by Jean Blanc, or the White Fox.

Strange as it may appear, when the "Great Ojibwa" asked permission of Captain Etherington to accept the challenge of the Sacs, to play a game of *baggattaway* upon the parade-ground in front of the fort, he immediately gave his consent, even saying that he would wager the Ojibwas would win the game. Yet this was just what the two scouts had warned him of, a curious illustration of how an obstinate man will knot the cord that is to hang himself.

The players were chosen from either side, and quickly prepared for a trial of skill—or rather the prologue to the tragedy. Stripped to the skin, save for the scanty breech-clout, grasping their thong-bound clubs, models of muscular grace and activity.

At either extremity of the parade-ground a tall painted post was planted, marking the stations of the rival bands. The game was to pass the ball beyond one of these posts, within a certain distance, using only the clubs. Simple

enough, to all appearances, yet great skill, cunning and activity is required where all players are experts.

The squaws and elder papposes were ranged near the gates of the fort, shrouded in the customary blanket. These gates were half open; a few of the soldiers remained within, perched upon the platform that ran along the inside of the pickets, eagerly watching the novel scene, laying trifling wagers upon one or the other of the parties. But the majority were outside the pickets, lazily lying on the ground smoking, laughing and talking. Apart stood the officers, betting fiercely upon their favorites, like true Englishmen.

Of all the pale-faces but one retained his customary weapons, ready for use. That was Caribou Zip. He stood apart, one hand upon the lock of his rifle.

Despite his insolent repulse on the preceding night he had made one more effort to put Captain Etherington upon his guard. Passing by one of the squaws, he had adroitly, as if by accident, twitched her blanket loose. His quick eye noticed a knife and hatchet secured to her waist.

He mentioned his discovery to the officer, and was threatened with being put into the guard-house, unless he held his peace.

"If you are such a coward, go hide your precious carcass in the mess-chest," sneered Etherington, and laughed with his subordinates at his own wit.

Choking down his rage as best he might, Caribou Zip turned away and moodily waited the result. Though feeling well assured that a merciless massacre must ensue, Graham could not bring himself to seek safety in flight, though he might easily have slipped off during the bustle, unnoticed.

Then the game opened. The ball was tossed high into the air, midway between the rival players. Then a swift dash was made by both parties, though each left a force to guard their goals. The ball was tossed here and there, knocked in every direction, kept in the air above the surging, struggling mass of contestants. Hundreds of little, agile figures now were bounding and leaping upon the parade grounds, their long, black locks streaming over their shoulders. At one moment they were all crowded together, struggling to gain possession of the ball; then a dextrous stroke would send it far

to one side, when the players would dart after it with the speed of a race-horse, each brave yelling, screeching at the top of his voice, now striking at the ball, now tripping up or knocking over an antagonist. And this continued for fully half an hour.

All save one of the spectators were deeply absorbed in the game. Caribou Zip narrowly watched every movement, expecting with each moment to hear the signal that should doom the English—that was to inaugurate the massacre.

It came full soon. A single yell—long, loud and penetrating, such as only Le Grande Sauter could utter—rose upon the air, and as by magic the tumult ceased, the desperate struggle for possession of the ball ended, and the mass of warriors stood still, their flashing eyes eagerly watching the ball as it shot high up into the air, describing a parabola as it descended toward the gates of the fort, fairly bounding into the inclosure.

A second peal broke from the lips of the Great Ojibwa, and then the mingled mass of warriors, both Sacs and Ojibwas darted after the ball, swinging their clubs, yelling as though carried away by the enthusiasm of the moment.

“God help the poor fools now!” muttered Caribou Zip as he glided rapidly aside. “A black, black day! and all because of one stupid—”

At that moment the mask was dropped, and the tragedy began. For a moment the warriors were mingled with the squaws and papposes. Then they leaped forward, their voices changed to the thrilling war-whoop, their hands grasping the deadly knife and tomahawk.

Confused, bewildered, not a hand was lifted to check their entrance, as the dusky horde hurled the gates wide open and rushed into the inclosure, thirsting for the work of death. Scarcely a man had any weapons about him, and they fell easy victims to the ruthless red-skins. Truly it was a massacre!

At the outset, strong hands seized upon Captain Etherington, Lieutenant Leslie and several other officers, overpowering them almost without resistance, and dragged them back toward the woods, to make sure of their not being rescued, though there was little danger of such an occurrence.

Within the inclosure, the Indians had matters all their own way. They murdered every Englishman they could find at first, though the Canadians, in more than one case, stood in their doors coolly watching the massacre, secure in their treacherous compact with the savages. Over three scout bodies, scalped, mutilated, appealed to Heaven against the criminal obstinacy of the man who *should* have been a leader.

As already stated, Caribou Zip darted aside when the savages made their rush, and by this move soon found himself beyond the enemy. For a moment he hesitated, and glanced toward the friendly woods, prudence bidding him seek safety in flight, which he could easily have accomplished during the confusion unnoticed. But then, as he heard the dying cries and groans of his comrades as they fell beneath the unsparing hands of the Indians, he forgot all else in a wild, burning thirst for vengeance, and raising his rifle, shot down a brawny Ojibwa whose blood-stained tomahawk was raised above the head of a second unarmed victim.

In the frightful uproar and confusion, this shot was not noticed, though the Ojibwa fell dead across the body of the unfortunate soldier, their deaths being nearly simultaneous. Caribou Zip hastily reloaded, and again picked off one of the enemy. But this time his shot was greeted with a yell of rage, and turning, he beheld nearly a dozen red-skins darting toward him, with brandished weapons.

These Indians were a part of those who had seized upon Etherington and his companions. The captives had been hurried to the shelter of the wood, and there left under guard. Eager to share in the massacre, the main portion of the Indians turned, just in time to witness Caribou Zip's second shot. With yells of anger, they darted toward him.

The first glance showed Caribou Zip that his retreat was cut off by way of the forest. Any attempt to gain it, would be fatal. Still he did not despair. Like a true scout, he had not entered upon the perils of that day, without first calculating his chances, and providing means of flight.

He immediately fled toward the water, hotly pursued by the Indians. Fortunately these have neither firearms nor bows, else the result might have been different. They would have picked him off as he ran.

Still bearing his rifle, Caribou Zip leaped into a small bark canoe that he had himself placed in readiness for some such emergency, the shock sending the frail craft far out into the lake. The next moment he was kneeling in the stern, plying the broad bladed paddle with all the skill and force that he could bring into play, skimming through or rather over the placid surface with the rapidity and grace of a swallow.

Yelling with rage at this unexpected move, the Indians dashed up the shore toward the little inlet where their boats were kept, though several of their number ran along the shore, evidently hoping to keep Caribou Zip from landing until their comrades could overtake him.

But they underrated the skill of their anticipated prey. Caribou Zip was an expert in the management of the paddle, and sent the bark along even faster than the nimble-footed Indians. Then, too, another fact aided in his escape.

A soldier, wounded and bleeding, had managed to break through the cordon of death, and fled toward the boats, seeing that only by them could he hope to escape the doom that had overtaken his fellows. Like wolves who had just tasted blood, the Indians turned aside to pursue this easier prey, and for the moment forgot all about the young scout. And when the soldier was overtaken and murdered, the canoe had disappeared around the point. Pursuit now would be almost folly—or if they should succeed in overtaking the scout, the tragedy at the fort would be over long ere they could return. Reasoning thus, the red-skins darted toward the inclosure, leaving their comrades to complete the task.

Nothing would have been easier than for Caribou Zip at once strike out into the lake, and thus place a safe distance between himself and enemies, since the water was placid, smooth as glass. And then, when the shades of night descended, he could either continue his course to Detroit, or return to the forest, unseen.

But instead of this, Graham paddled along, scarcely a gunshot from shore, straining every muscle in the endeavor to distance the Indians. These, now bothered some by the brush and vines that covered the lake shore, were gradually

losing ground, despite their strenuous efforts. The scout noted this fact with no little delight, and he hoped that the enemy would soon give over the pursuit, and hasten back to where victims were more plenty and scalps easier earned. Caribou Zip's reasons for following his bold and risky course, are easily explained. He had resolved not to leave that part of the country, dangerous as it was to all who owned allegiance to King George, without taking with him Cecile Boucher.

Though Francois Boucher was a Canadian, and, if any thing, friendly toward the Indians, since he was intimate with Jean Blanc, the renegade, Graham felt that Cecile would be in great peril if left where she was. He knew from experience how the sight of blood blinds an Indian's eyesight, and when one scalp is taken, it begets a burning desire for more, and in the delirious excitement of their easy victory, the Indians would not be too particular, but quite as likely as not lift the scalp of a "neutral" first, then ask questions afterward. Besides, another danger threatened Cecile; a danger but little if any better than death. Jean Blanc was a suitor for her hand, and was favored by the father. Cecile had repeatedly refused him, even insulted him, but still he persisted in his persecutions. But now Jean Blanc was a personage of far greater pretensions. He was an ally of Le Grande Sauter—his word was law among the Canadians—he was a man to be dreaded.

This was why Caribou Zip did not take to immediate flight, instead of hovering round the flame that might fatally scorch his wings.

For nearly an hour Graham continued his steady, powerful sweeps of the paddle, though he had lost sight of his pursuers and hoped they had turned back in disgust. Still he was not foolhardy enough to run any unnecessary risk, and did not relax his efforts until certain that he could gain the shore and break his trail before the enemy could come up.

This he finally accomplished by running the canoe beneath a low hanging bush, then climbing up this into the sweeping boughs of a tree, passing on through a second, dropping upon a fallen tree whose long trunk carried him some sixty yards from the water's edge without leaving the

slightest trace of his passage. Still, to make assurance doubly sure, he covered his trail for some distance further, then struck out through the woods toward Francois Boucher's cabin.

"God grant that the mischief be not already done!" anxiously muttered Graham, his bronzed cheek paling. "And yet—that devil was not at the fort—has not been there since yesterday! It may be only his cowardice—that he was afraid to face the storm he helped fan into a blaze—and he is only keeping his precious skin out of danger. I *will* believe that is it."

With a dread presentiment troubling his head and heart, the scout glided swiftly along, yet leaving as faint a trail behind him as the nature of the ground would admit. His uneasiness increased as he neared the Boucher cabin, and he fairly broke into a run, pausing only when the edge of the little clearing was reached. Then, casting a fearful glance through the foliage, his heart gave one great throb of thankfulness.

The cabin was still standing, and all seemed well, for Cecile was just entering, her voice raised in a light love-song, as she busied herself about her household duties.

Graham hesitated for a moment, but then strode toward the cabin, muttering:

"The old man can not blame me for coming, when I tell him what has happened, though his tongue is sharp as a rattler's tooth!"

He had not crossed half the cleared tract, when two men came round from the rear of the cabin. A frown darkened the young scout's face, but he knew that he was seen, and he would not retreat.

One of the men was Francois Boucher, a large, massive, stolid looking Canadian; the other was Jean Blanc, the White Fox of the secret council.

Despite his courage, Graham felt a little uneasy as he advanced, the two men eying him closely, in no very pleasant manner. One of them, at least, was a sworn enemy. Might he not have a force of his Indians or Canadians close at hand? If so, now that the mask had fairly been thrown off, the young scout need look for little mercy.

"If Brant was only here!" muttered Caribou Zip, through his teeth. "'Twould have to be a goodly force to take us *men*!"

"What is your business here, young man?" demanded Boucher, in a surly tone, as Graham came near. "I warned you that your room was better than your company on *my* grounds. Have you forgotten?"

"Such words are easier remembered than forgotten," quietly replied Zip, though his cheek flushed; but the sight of Cecile standing in the doorway enabled him to choke down his temper. "I merely come to warn you—"

"Your warnings, like yourself, are not wanted here," growled Boucher.

"You will be sorry for this language, some time, Mr. Boucher. But I will not take offense at a hasty word. I tell you, man, that you are in danger here—do you know that the Indians have dug up the hatchet—that they have attacked the fort and massacred all the soldiers?"

"Pray how did *you* escape, then?" sneered Jean Blanc. "Were there none of the braves that could measure heels with you?"

"The less *you* say, Jean Blanc, the healthier 'twill be for you. I owe you something already, and I mean to pay the debt, too. You are not *in council* now," pointedly retorted Zip.

Blanc involuntarily fell back, behind his huge comrade. Boucher said:

"And suppose they have risen, what is that to me? I am a peaceful man—I am not at odds with the Indians. They will not molest me."

"A white scalp is a scalp in their eyes, now that they have tasted blood, let the hair grow on the head of French man or Englishman. Besides, there is your daughter to think of. For her sake, if not for your own, take my advice and seek a spot of safety, until this trouble blows over. 'Twill not last long—the red devils will soon be scattered and whipped into peace. But while it *does* last, no white men will be safe in these parts—much less a helpless woman," warmly added Graham.

And, pray, where will you find a safer spot than this?"

interrupted Jean Blanc. "Detroit has fallen, so has Presqu' Isle, Niagara, Pitt, Sandusky—"

"Detroit has *not* fallen, nor do I believe either of the other posts have been captured. Your red friends should call you Snake, instead of Fox, since your tongue is so crooked! But, I am not speaking with you just now. Boucher, I addressed *you*."

"And I gave you my answer. Let that satisfy you. I am no coward to flee from an imaginary danger, if you are. Here is my home, and here I stay. But *you* can go—and the sooner the better."

"You are *her* father, and can say what no other man would *dare* to tell me," quietly replied Zip, and his eye flashed ominously.

"Help me take him prisoner, and I'll give you twenty pounds!" hissed Jean Blanc into the huge settler's ear.

"Why, what can he do now?" muttered Boucher, his eyes sparkling avariciously.

"While he lives Cecile will never have eyes for any other—and you remember our compact."

"I'll do it—"

"Just in time, Joseph," gayly cried Zip, as a tall, lithe figure stepped into the clearing. "Now, my friends, talk out loud; 'tis ill-manners to whisper in company," and Graham laughed in the faces of the two plotters, whose faces he had read correctly, though their words had not been heard.

"What is the matter, brother?" gravely inquired Thayendanegea.

"A little jest—nothing more. But whither so fast, my odd Snake?" he added, as Jean Blanc turned to slink away.

"Shall I stop him?" asked Brant.

"Has he any of his red or white dogs near at hand?"

"No—the woods are empty. It has no scalp."

"Then let him go. I would hate to soil my hands in such blood. Now, Mr. Boucher, what do you say to *my* proposition?"

CHAPTER III.

THE ROSE OF THE WILDWOOD.

THE giant settler did not seem exactly at his ease; the sudden change appeared to confuse him. With one hand mechanically seeking the hilt of his knife he glanced from one to the other of the young scouts as though expecting an attack.

"You're two to one, but I'm not afraid of ye," he muttered, his eyes beginning to kindle.

"You mistake me, Mr. Boucher," quickly returned Caribou Zip. "I would be your friend, not your enemy. What I told you is true—about the fall of the fort. Your lives are in danger here. The Indians are perfect devils when once they have lapped blood. If you remain here, 'twill be only to meet your death. Bear us company, then. I pledge you my honor that we will land you in safety at Detroit—or else lose our scalps in the attempt."

"You're worse than an old woman! I told ye once that I would not go—I say it again. There's no use in your wasting any more breath. Go your ways—and leave me alone to follow mine," doggedly replied the settler.

"Cecile," cried the scout, brushing past the father and taking the maiden's hand. "Cecile, you have heard my words—then try and persuade your father to listen to reason. Even if he resolved to stay here himself, he has no right to drag you into danger."

"What can I say? He will not listen to me," faltered Cecile.

"Say? tell him that you will not be kept here to fall a victim to the Indians or—even worse—into the hands of that cowardly rascal and renegade, Jean Blanc. Tell him that you trust me, and beg him to join us in the attempt to gain Detroit, before it is too late. An hour's delay may be fatal—the woods will soon be swarming with the red-skins, searching for scalps, and drunk with blood as they will be, not even their friends will be safe."

"Boy, drop that hand," sternly uttered Boucher, advancing, an expression of anger distorting his massive features. "You've got the impudence of the very devil!"

"Don't you strike me, Boucher—I won't bear that even from *her* father. Lay a finger on me in that way, and I'll kill you in your tracks."

"Father—Zip—" faltered Cecile.

"Child, go in the house—and close the door after you," sternly added Boucher.

"Cecile, don't you do it. Stay where you are. This matter may as well be settled here at once. You will have to choose between us sometime—let it be now," quickly said Caribou Zip.

"I don't understand—"

"Cecile, you know that I love you—that my dearest hope in life is to make you my wife. And, too, you have said that you thought you could learn to love me in return. I have asked your father for his consent, but he has refused to give it. He swore that I should never be more to you than I am now."

"And I mean it, too!" growled Boucher, sullenly.

"Then you must choose between us two, Cecile. If you stay here, with him, you will fall into the hands of either Jean Blanc or the Indians. Go with me—I will take you to a place of safety; and then—we will be married. Cecile, darling, do not let a feeling of false sentiment outweigh your true heart—if a father persists in keeping a child in a position of danger, after being repeatedly warned, surely he forfeits all claim upon that child's obedience. Answer me, darling—you will go with me—and my brother?"

"Daughter, give this modest youth the answer he asks. Tell him that you are my child—the daughter of a Frenchman. Tell him that you know your duty too well to be led from it by a few silly words."

"He is my father, Zip," faltered Cecile.

"Did you understand what I said, Cecile?" added Caribou Zip, in a strained voice, his bronzed cheek paling. "That you must choose between him and I? And for the last time!"

"Good-by then, dear Zip; he is my father—I must obey him," faltered Cecile, her voice trembling.

"Spoken like my own child!" cried Boucher, exultantly.

"Like a true coquette, rather!" bitterly retorted Zip.

"Good-by then, since you will have it thus. It serves me right for being fool enough to believe in what woman says! Come, brother, this is no place for us; follow me!"

With these words, Graham turned upon his heel and strode swiftly toward the woods, followed by Joseph Brant. In his wounded pride, and anger, Caribou Zip did not notice the appealing cry that burst from Cecile's lips, as she sprung toward him, her arms outstretched. Then the hands of the settler arrested her, and with a low, heartrending moan, Cecile sunk into his arms, a dead weight. For the first time in her life she had fainted.

The feelings of Caribou Zip were not greatly to be envied as he glided through the forest, after casting one glance back toward the lone cabin, where he saw the father and daughter just disappearing within the building. He could not tell that Boucher was carrying the senseless Cecile in his arms.

The two scouts proceeded in silence for over a mile, after leaving the clearing that surrounded Boucher's cabin, and then Brant, seeing that his friend was rapidly cooling down, tapped him upon the shoulder.

"What is it, brother?"

"The sun is high, yet, and though a long trail lies before us, we have plenty of time. Shall we sit down and take counsel of each other?"

"If you wish it—though there is only one trail for *my* feet to follow," gloomily added Caribou Zip.

"One trail is enough, but two pair of moccasins may follow it after all," smiled Thayendanega.

"What do you mean?" quickly demanded Zip.

"First, let us find a better spot than this to rest in. An enemy—and we know there are many of them in these parts—passing by, could not help seeing us in this open. Over yonder, by the dead oak, we will find a snug hiding-place. There we can talk at our ease."

Thayendanega, as the reader knows, though an Indian, was well educated. He spoke the English language fluently.

though with a slight accent—which no red-skin can ever entirely overcome.

The brother scouts crossed the opening, and soon found a snug covert beneath the vine-clad limbs of a fallen tree, where they ran no risk of being discovered by any passer-by. Then Graham asked :

“What did you mean, Brant, by *two* pair of moccasins following the same trail?”

“There should be no concealment between friends and brothers. We will be free and open with each other. Listen, then. We will talk about the maiden *you* love, first; and then I will tell you of *my* heart,” quietly added Thayendanegea.

“Not that little—”

“Yes; of Kalne, the Oneida maiden—the captive of Watam, the Ottawa. She is very dear to the heart of Brant—as dear to him as the white flower is to Zip.

“But listen. When a brave lets the sweet song-bird steal its way into his heart to build its nest, he is so fond of looking inward and watching it, that he can not see straight when he looks ahead. Something grows over his eyes, and every thing else is changed. At such times a man may act very foolishly, just when he wishes to be cool and just. Like my brother a while since.”

“What else could I do? You must admit that I acted just as you, or any *man*, would have acted.”

“No; there is where my brother sees crooked. If his heart had not been so soft toward the white flower, then his tongue would have been less hard and sharp.”

“Then you think I was too hasty?”

“Listen. The white flower is a good maiden. She often reads the book given us by Manitou. It tells her to honor her father and mother. Her mother has gone to the spirit-land, but her father still lives. What could she say when you bade her choose between you two—to leave her father and follow you? Had she listened to your words, the big dark man would have killed her—or you. This is why she said no.

“Now if my brother had been wise, he would have waited until he could have met the white flower alone. Then she

would have seen only him, heard only *his* voice, and she would have believed all he said to her. It is not too late now. Let my brother do this, let him whisper softly in the white flower's ear, and the two pair of moccasins will yet follow the same trail."

"Do you think so? If I could only believe—"

"Will the sun go down behind the trees in the west? Then the white flower will be at the big oak tree this evening, even though she may believe you have gone forever. It is human nature—for her heart is soft toward Caribou Zip, and she will go there so that she may be alone while the little bird is singing in her heart of her brave."

"If I thought you were right—"

"Does Caribou forget what I said about Kalne?" asked Thayendanegea, smiling quietly.

"And since *you* are in love, you think yourself an oracle, eh?" laughed Graham, considerably relieved. "Don't frown, chief, I was only jesting. But see. You say that little Kalne has won your heart. Surely you are not going to remain in these parts, now that the fort has fallen? You are too well known as a friend of the English. These rascals would hunt you down like a wild beast."

"No, I am going to Detroit—and with you, unless you are in too big a hurry. I can not leave my heart behind me. Kalne must accompany me."

"It's a risky job, chief," thoughtfully replied Graham. "Wawatam looks upon Kalne as *his* squaw. I fear 'twill be impossible to get her out of the village."

"Thayendanegea can turn fox, if he wishes. When he tries to hide his footsteps, what Ottawa has eyes keen enough to discover him?" quietly replied the chief.

"Well, you can count upon my help, if it is needed."

"No; you have the white flower to look after. I will go alone."

After this manner the two scouts conversed for an hour or more, laying their plans for the coming night. The young chief—for such Thayendanegea was by birth—was to steal into the Ottawa village at L'Arbre Croche, and return with Kalne, the Oneida maiden, while Caribou Zip was to seek Cecile at the trysting oak, and, if possible, to persuade her to

flee with him, when her father would surely follow her, thus preserving them all from the revolting red-skins. The two couple were then to meet at an appointed rendezvous, and make the best of their way to Detroit or some other point of refuge, lying hidden during daylight, traveling only by night.

But there their consultation was abruptly broken by a terribly significant sound that caused them both to leap erect—that caused the blood to rush back to Caribou Zip's heart, almost suffocating him, leaving his cheek pale and ghastly.

A rifle crack, clear and distinct, though subdued by distance, followed by several others; the faint shriek of a woman's voice; a series of wild, blood-curdling yells and whoops that could only proceed from savage throats.

"Cecile—my God!" gasped Caribou Zip, in agony.

"The Indians have attacked the big dark man!" cried Thayendanegea, looking to his rifle. "Come, we will save the white flower or else take the scalps of the dogs who dared to harm her!"

Caribou Zip made no reply, for he was already darting at top speed toward the lone cabin, for from thence had come the alarm. Thayendanegea followed him closely, though he had to strain every muscle to its utmost to avoid being distanced by the lover.

Within five minutes from the first shot, the scouts were upon the edge of the clearing. Caribou Zip would have dashed right out into the open, regardless of danger, had not Brant, by a strenuous effort, leaped forward and caught him by the arm, holding him firm, just within the timber belt.

"Would you ruin all by acting the fool?" he angrily hissed "Look out there. At your first step they would tomahawk the white flower. No, we must not act like babies."

"*She is in danger,*" hoarsely muttered Graham.

"And we will free her, but we must strike the first blow. See—we can creep up behind yonder bush. From that we can shoot two, then charge the rest in time to keep them from killing the maiden."

From their covert a thrilling scene was visible. Clustered before the cabin were five Indians, yelling and screeching like veritable demons, dancing around one of their number who tossed aloft the bleeding scalp of the ill-fated Francois

Boucher. The settler's body lay across the doorstep ; kneeling beside it was Cecile, weeping and wringing her hands in agony.

It seemed that the settler had emerged from his cabin, just as the Indians came up. They had immediately fired upon him, killing him instantly. He was scalped at once, and the red-skins, doubtless feeling sure that Cecile could not escape them, gave themselves up to the wild joy the taking of even a single scalp without loss to their own party invariably produces.

Caribou Zip took in the scene at a glance, and saw the truth of Thayendanegea's words.

" You're right, Brant ; I was a fool. From the bush your arrows will be sure of their mark. If we are quick and cautious, we can rub out the entire party. Come—by the creek is the best way."

Brant made no reply, but followed close upon the heels of Caribou Zip, at the same time tightening the string of the bow that, until now, had hung at his back. Through its aid the scouts hoped to overcome the Indians, without giving any time or opportunity for flight, as the survivors would soon find friends and guide them after the pale-faces.

A few moments carried the brother scouts to the creek, along which they waded until opposite the bush or rather clump of bushes that had been indicated by Thayendanegea. Then, by crawling flat upon their bellies, they succeeded in gaining the bush undiscovered.

" Quick ! they're taking Cecile away !"

" No—only to the tree yonder. They will not leave until the cabin is plundered," coolly replied Brant.

" Give me the two rifles—you use the bow. I'll take the two nearest Cecile—you look to the others."

" Good. But don't waste a shot. Their scalps are ours sure enough ; nor is the white flower in danger, except from the Indian holding her arm."

Caribou Zip made no reply, but leveled his long rifle at the Indian alluded to ; a huge, brawny Ojibwa. Then, with a low muttered word to Thayendanegea, as a signal, he touched the trigger. Dropping the weapon, Graham caught up the second rifle without pausing to note the effect of his

shot, so confident was he of his aim. Nor was this confidence misplaced.

At the report, the huge Ojibwa turned half round, uplifted his hands and then fell forward upon his face, shot through the brain, dead. Cecile stood motionless, as though petrified with surprise.

Simultaneously with the bullet, an arrow sped from the bow of the young chief, burying its barbed point deep in the bosom of an Indian, reaching the very seat of life. Quick as thought another and another feathered messenger of death hurtled through the air, delivered with all the force and precision that afterward made the name of Thayendanegea so celebrated as an archer. Indeed, so quickly were the shafts dispatched that when Graham discharged the second rifle, the Indian at whom he aimed had already received his death wound.

The echoes of the first shot had not yet died away, ere the last one of the marauders lay upon the blood-stained ground.

Caribou Zip rose from his covert and sprung toward Cecile, catching her sinking form in his arms. The sight of a friend's face had broken the spell that bound her.

"Thank God! I returned in time!" muttered Graham, as he pressed ardent kisses upon her unresisting lips.

Joseph Brant took matters more coolly, and stopped to reload both rifles before breaking cover. Then he stooped over the fallen red-skins, removing his arrows from their bodies. Then there was no danger of these telltales betraying how the Indians met their death. For a moment he glanced hesitatingly toward the lovers, but then deftly robbed the dead of their scalps.

This was the young chief's first war-trail. When he returned to his people, he must carry them evidence of having upheld the honor of his tribe.

"There is a bad smell in the air," said Thayendanegea, approaching the young couple. "There are more of the bad Indians about. They may have heard the noise, and will come down to see what is the matter. The white flower is too young to lose her scalp now."

"You're right, chief. Cecile, darling, you will trust me now?" added Graham, tenderly.

"God help me! I have no one else; I am alone in the world now," moaned Cecile. "But go—there is danger for you—better that one should die than all—besides, I have nothing to live for, now!"

"Live for me—am I nothing to you, darling? Do you think we could abandon you, even though certain death threatened? No—we are men, at all events."

"Act now—talk afterwards," impatiently said Brant

"But—father—I can not—"

"Darling, you can do no good by staying here. Your father is dead—would it help him any if you were to throw away your life? Come—we will place you in safety, and then I will return and give your father such burial as our time and means will admit."

Cecile made no further objections; indeed she was half insensible, and Caribou Zip was obliged to bear her to the creek bank in his arms. Here she was placed in the canoe that had belonged to Boucher, and the scouts passed rapidly down the dark stream, heading toward the lake.

When nearly a mile from the cabin, the boat was run up to a dense clump of bushes, and Cecile put beneath the cover. By this time she had partially regained her composure, and expressed her willingness to remain alone, while the scouts returned to bury the body of her father. A word from Brant induced Graham to accept this proposal. Every moment was of deepest value now, and two pair of hands could make quick work of the sad duty.

The clearing was found just as it had been left, there having been no arrivals as the scouts had feared would be the case. Graham wondered that Jean Blanc had not returned. Surely he would not give up his prize without an attempt to regain it?

The body of Francois Boucher was deposited in a shallow grave in the forest, his scalp being reverently replaced upon his head. Then, when the mold was tramped down, Thayendanegea spoke:

"Brother, you must return alone. I promised Kalne that I would come for her, and a chief does not lie. You must paddle on until you reach the lake. After that the danger will not be so great, as by that time it will be night. When

It is found that the white flower is gone, without leaving any trail, the creek will be searched close. You must pass its mouth before then. Keep on down the shore until you reach the point where the three dead trees stand. You will find good cover there. Wait for me at that point, if I do not get there first."

"You will not be reckless, chief?"

"No; but I must take Kalne with me."

"Good-by, then. If you do not return, I'll have a scalp for every hair of your head!"

The brothers shook hands, and then parted, Caribou Zip returning to the canoe and paddling rapidly toward the point where he had left Cecile. Nearing this, he uttered the low whistle that had so often called the maiden to the side of her lover beneath the trysting-tree, and as it was answered, he propelled the canoe to land. Helping Cecile in, Graham resumed the paddle and swiftly swept down the sluggish current.

Cecile ventured a few questions, but Zip, who knew not from what point danger might menace them, answered briefly, as there might be danger of being overheard from the shores, even though the twilight was settling fast.

By the time they reached the lake, night had fairly descended, and it was with increased hope that Zip paddled along at a safe distance from shore, for he believed that the worst portion of the night's journey was past.

Cecile crouched down in the bottom of the canoe, deep buried in sad, heart-rending thoughts. What a terrible change the last few hours had made in her life! And only the past evening, she had been so happy.

Caribou Zip abruptly checked the canoe, a little exclamation breaking from his lips as he peered keenly ahead, seeking to pierce the hazy gloom that veiled the surface of the lake. His keen ear had caught the faint splash, as of a paddle carelessly wielded.

The next moment he detected the dim, phantom-like shapes of half a dozen canoes, heading directly toward him, not ---

CHAPTER IV.

HOMAGE TO THE BLIND GOD.

WHEN Thayendanegea parted with his brother scout, there was nothing betokening either hesitation or doubt in his actions. He had fully decided upon his course, and lost no time in setting about it.

Retracing his steps from the creek, Brant paused beside one of the corpses that still cumbered the ground in front of the cabin door. From the manner of wearing the paint that was plentifully bedaubed on the dead brave's face and breast, from the cut of his moccasins as well as minor items, the young chief knew that an Ottawa had fallen by his hand, though the others were all Ojibwas.

Stooping, Thayendanegea lifted the dead Ottawa in his arms and bore him across the clearing, entering a clump of bushes that surrounded a bushy tree. From this spot, by peering through the leaves, Brant had a tolerable view of the clearing, and would be apt to observe any persons entering it, himself unseen.

From the little pouch that was secured to the dead brave's girdle, Brant drew forth various articles; among them paint and a small fragment of a mirror. Taking one of these, he painted his face and upper body in a peculiar manner, the lines and symbols contradicting each other. This completed to his satisfaction, Brant donned the dead brave's moccasins and leggings, rolling his own garments up into a compact bundle.

With a last look at himself, Thayendanegea left the spot and struck boldly into the forest. After traversing perhaps a mile, he paused beside a huge, gnarled tree, and stooping, parted the bushes at its base, revealing a hollow, into which he thrust his bundle.

The shades of night settled down over the scene, as the young chief still pressed through the forest; still, at about the same moment when Caribou Zip first discovered the shadowy canoes, Thayendanegea stepped into the Ottawa village at L'Arbre Croche.

He had resolved upon a bold course ; one that, if detected in, would certainly condemn him to death. And when it is known that Thayendanegea had more than once entered the village in his own proper person, the reader will give him credit for considerable nerve. Yet the paint so plentifully bestowed upon his face, gave him quite a different expression. Brant strode at once to the lodge of Wawatam, and entering, squatted down by the fire, simply nodding toward the huge, stalwart chief. The Ottawa, though casting more than one curious glance toward the stranger, did not speak, though he handed Brant the pipe he had been smoking. Silently accepting this, Thayendanegea smoked until the bowl was emptied ; then after knocking out the ashes and returning the pipe, he spoke in the Ottawa dialect.

“ I am Deerfoot—a runner. I came from our great Sachem, Pontiac.”

At this name, then nearing its zenith, Wawatam bowed low, in reverence. A faint murmur from without the door, told Brant others were listening to his words, but for this he did not care. He knew that the Ottawas must still be ignorant of what had that day occurred at fort Mackinaw, from the quiet that reigned in the village.

“ The Great Chief,” continued the young man, “ put words in my mouth to carry to Wawatam. He said : let my son sharpen his weapons and take up the war-trail—let him send me word that the Great Turtle has no longer a scalp. These are the words he bade me carry. But they are useless now. Pontiac will hear that Michilimackinac has been taken, even while Wawatam slept. Will he like to hear that the Ojibwas and the Sacs have done more than his own tribe ? That will not be sweet in his ears !”

“ Wawatam is ready—his weapons *are* sharp, and thirst for the blood of the pale-faces who live in the Great Turtle. But the chief said—wait ; do not strike until I send you word. So I waited. Now he *has* sent me word. I will bring him the scalp of his enemy. How can the Ojibwas do better than this ?”

“ The scalp is already taken. Only the Ojibwas and Sacs live in Michilimackinac now.”

At this startling assertion, the assumed composure of Wa

watam gave way, and he eagerly questioned the young chief as to what had occurred. The pretended runner gave a hasty outline of what had actually occurred, adding that he had been misinformed as to where the Ottawa village was located, and only learned his mistake on reaching the fort.

The village was now in an uproar. The words had been caught up by those listening before the lodge, and was spread in an instant. Thayendanegea laughed inwardly at the perfect success of his plan, thus far.

Wawatam was terribly excited and angry over what he chose to term the double-dealing of his allies, in striking such a blow without giving him the promised warning. Rushing from his lodge, he sounded his war-cry and rallied his braves round him. Then he harangued them, urging his braves to aid him in removing this stain cast upon them.

This was the moment that Thayendanegea had been watching for, and he passed from the lodge, unobserved. He paused beside the next lodge, and gently touched the arms of a squaw, who, together with her companions, had been attracted by the unusual excitement.

The squaw started back as she saw the painted face so close to hers, but then a faint whisper changed the surprise to joy. She had recognized her lover.

"Follow me—but quietly. The time has come that I told you of. You must choose between Wawatam and me."

"I have chosen—I will follow," softly breathed the Indian maiden, for it was indeed Kalne, the Oneida girl, of whom Brant had spoken to Caribou Zip.

Thayendanegea glided noiselessly through the village, choosing the deepest shadows, though nearly all the inhabitants were now gathered around Wawatam, in the central square. Close upon the young chief's heels trod Kalne, asking no questions, placing implicit confidence in the one to whom she had surrendered her heart.

Thus far, all had worked like a charm, just as Thayendanegea had planned it. Yet this was not to continue. Danger threatened them from an unexpected quarter.

As before stated, Kalne was an Oneida maiden. She had been captured, with others, years before, during a foray into that portion of Canada inclosed by the Great Lakes. Though

a mere child, Kalne gave promise of no common beauty, and the chief, Wawatam, gave her to his eldest squaw to care for. It may be that he was looking a long way ahead—certain it is that at the time this story opens, he had ordered Kalne to prepare to enter his lodge as his squaw. But, unluckily for his plans, Kalne had met Thayendanegea, and love had sprung up in her heart for the handsome young scout. Unluckily for the lovers, their last meeting had been noted by the old squaw, who at once informed Wawatam. Brant escaped, but Kalne was warned that a severe punishment would be hers, if she ventured to disobey again. And Wawatam gave his squaw strict orders not to lose sight of Kalne for a moment, night or day.

This squaw had been standing close beside Kalne when Thayendanegea addressed her, and as the lovers glided away they were followed, though so adroitly that their backward glances failed to discover this fact.

The lovers paused beside the last lodge, to listen. Though the confusion behind was great, there was nothing to tell of their being discovered, amid the different sounds. But then, just as he was about to step forward, Brant heard a footfall close behind them, though concealed by the lodge.

The squaw rounded the lodge, then paused abruptly, with a little exclamation of surprise. She had discovered the two motionless forms. Still she had no difficulty in recognizing Kalne, and angrily exclaimed:

“Come—come back with me, or I will tell the chief how his squaw spend her time talking with—”

Thayendanegea believed his identity was suspected, if indeed not known, and did not pause for more. It would not do to be interrupted now.

Leaping forward, he dealt the old squaw a crushing blow with his clenched hand, felling her to the ground like a log. This he believed would silence her for a time; let them once get a fair start and he cared not how soon the Ottawas discovered the cheat put upon them.

“Come—the trail is open now,” he said, taking Kalne by the hand. “You are not afraid?”

“You are my chief—what should I fear while with you?” simply replied Kalne.

Thayendanegea stooped and pressed his lips warmly to hers, then, as if ashamed of betraying so much feeling, he turned and strode rapidly toward the forest. Just as he entered the timber, he paused, uttering an unmistakable oath.

From the edge of the village arose a shrill, angry screech, followed by another and another.

"'Tis old Kiashuta—she will alarm the village!" murmured Kalne, clinging to her lover's arm.

"I should have used the hatchet—but I could not strike a squaw. Come—she will soon put them upon our trail. If they catch us now, they will take our scalps. But first they must win them," briefly added Thayendanegea.

Though the chief had delivered the blow with the full force of his muscular arm, it had only slightly confused the old squaw, not even stunning her. Nature had endowed her with an unusually thick skull, and a long life of quarreling, fighting, giving and receiving blows and buffets, had hardened her occiput still more. Thus it was that old Kiashuta regained her feet in time to discover which way the lovers had fled, and then raised her voice in alarm.

Screeching thus, she at once rushed back to where the chief, Wawatam, stood, enraged that his speech should be thus unceremoniously interrupted. But Kiashuta crowded her way to his side, and quickly made known what had occurred. Though the gloom had prevented her from making out the features of Kalne's companion, she fancied she had recognized the young scout's form; at least she declared that it was none other than Thayendanegea who had struck her.

The rage of Wawatam was frightful, when he found that Kalne was indeed missing. Yet he did not forget the message sent him—as he believed—by Pontiac, and while detaching a dozen of his swiftest runners to follow the fugitives, he himself prepared to lead the other braves on to Michilimackinac.

Fully assured that speedy pursuit would be made, Brant bent all his energies to gaining a safe distance. Kalne nobly seconded him, keeping close upon his heels, no matter how swiftly he fled. The scout did not find her an incumbrance, for a time, at least.

Yet, had he been alone, Thayendanagea would have laughed at pursuit. Though the stars were shining brightly and the vault of heaven was without a cloud, beneath the forest tree-tops eyesight was of little avail, unless to distinguish objects at only a few feet distance. As for following a trail, that would be impossible, save by the aid of hounds. To his question, Kalne replied that the only dogs kept at the village were curs. True, these were often used in trailing by scent, but Brant held them in contempt.

The young chief pressed on as rapidly as possible, heading direct for the hollow tree where he had left his clothing. He regretted, now, having promised to meet Caribou Zip on dead-tree point. Only for that, he would have made a wide detour, carrying his trail so far from the course an enemy would naturally expect him to take, as to escape observation, for a time, at least. But this he dare not do, now. He knew that Graham would await him at the rendezvous, having perfect confidence in his word.

While fleeing through the woods, Brant kept every sense upon the alert, frequently pausing to listen, bending an ear to the ground. He believed that the enemy would hasten forward at top speed, and, if failing to overtake the fugitives, would place themselves in hiding along the route they would be most apt to follow, hoping to intercept their prey in this manner. Indeed, until day should dawn, when the trail could be searched for, this was all the Ottawas could do.

Thayendanagea soon found that he had read the plans of the enemy aright, for, after traversing several miles, the rapid fall of feet grew plainer and plainer every time he paused to hearken, until he feared to run any further lest the savages should also distinguish his footsteps. Claspings Kalne's hand still closer, he turned aside and ran swiftly for a few yards, then halted, standing close behind a huge tree-trunk, a drawn knife in his hand.

"We will wait and let these dogs pass; then we'll have an easier trail to follow," quietly uttered Brant, his left arm encircling the lithe, yielding form of the Indian maiden.

Kalne made no reply. It was sufficient for her that the chief believed such a course the best. He had her implicit trust and confidence.

The next minute the lovers heard the foremost of their pursuers pass by, unsuspecting how narrowly they were missing their longed-for prey. Their footfalls died away in the distance, and once more all was still save for the usual forest sounds. Then Brant resumed his journey, though more leisurely than before, since any unusual noise might betray them to their enemies. More than ever Thayendanegea regretted having made the rendezvous with Graham. Only for that, a comparatively safe trail would be open to him.

Their situation was a peculiar one, as they pressed forward as rapidly as was consistent with prudence. The pursued had changed places with their pursuers, and might at any moment step into a trap set for them. To say the least it was an uncomfortable prospect.

Yet Brant did not hesitate for a moment, but pressed on, heading for the hollow tree already spoken of, where he meant to effect a change of clothing. And truly fortune seemed smiling upon the lovers, for the spot was reached without further alarm, nothing having been heard of the Indians who had rushed past them in the gloom.

Thayendanegea entered the tree, and rapidly unrolled his garments. At that moment Kalne uttered a faint exclamation, and pressed closer to the tree. Her quick ear had caught the sound of footsteps, together with voices in eager conversation.

Brant did not question her, for as he emerged from the opening, the same sounds were audible to him, and more, the footsteps were coming directly toward their covert. Taking Kalne by the hand, Brant drew her into the hollow trunk, then awaited the result in breathless suspense.

The Indians paused close beside the clump of bushes that grew around the base of the tree, and their every word was distinctly audible to the concealed lovers. From this they learned that the party of Ottawas had pressed on to gain the front of the fugitives, hoping to thus intercept them. Then it was that, remembering what the supposed runner from Pontiac had told them, they resolved to hasten to the Boucher cabin and see if they could not secure the capture of the big dark man and his daughter. Instead, they found the cabin

empty, deserted, and several Indian corpses lying upon the ground.

Who had done this? Possibly a search might discover some "sign" to explain all, but for that they must await until day-dawn. Meanwhile they might as well be trying to secure the fugitives after whom they had been sent.

Such was the purport of the words heard by the chief and Kalne, as they crouched together inside the hollow tree. Brant listened eagerly enough for their final decision, some being in favor of going further on, others wishing to remain where they then were.

If the last was decided upon, the fate of the fugitives was certain. They could not escape from their covert unheard, and when daylight came, their trail would be inevitably discovered. Brant choked down a bitter oath as the Ottawas compose themselves upon the ground, with the intention of awaiting the coming of day. All seemed lost. Now that the Indians were perfectly quiet, the faintest movement of the fugitives must have been overheard, and their position being cramped was already far from comfortable.

Suddenly a faint hoot came from the forest, and was immediately answered by one of the Indians beside the tree. The signal was repeated, and the Ottawas eagerly consulted together. Then they arose and glided away.

Brant touched Kalne's lips with his finger, and then passed through the opening. All was still; the enemy had all gone.

Fairly trembling with joy, Brant called to Kalne, and then they once more resumed their journey. Truly fortune was standing their friend.

CHAPTER V.

THE DEEDS OF A LOVER.

For a single moment Caribou Zip hesitated, seemingly at a loss what to do. The phantom-like canoes were, beyond a doubt, rapidly approaching him, nor was it at all likely that they would pass by without the savage occupants observing the fugitives. Indeed, Caribou Zip wondered that he had not already been discovered, forgetting that half a dozen canoes make a larger mark than a single boat, and that of small size.

But Graham hesitated only for one brief, fleeting instant. Then he dipped his paddle deep down and swept the canoe's bow toward land. Though done so quickly, not the faintest splash belied the scout's skill.

A single sweep of the broad-bladed paddle and the light barque glided over the surface into the deep shadows, the impetus given it being so great that Graham resigned his paddle and checked their progress by grasping the low-bending boughs of the bushes that fringed the shore.

Easing these boughs back, he found that they completely inclosed the canoe and its occupants, so that, unless by daylight, an enemy might pass by within arm's length of the covert without suspecting their presence. And long before daylight, Caribou Zip thought, he would be miles and miles away from the spot, for he felt assured that the Indians had not detected the lone canoe, nor yet had they heard the hasty flight, since no cry had come to his ears; and yet, as he cautiously parted the foliage and peered out upon the bosom of the lake, Graham felt a cold thrill creep over his person, and his cheek turned pale, though the friendly gloom hid the latter fact.

He saw that the shadowy-outlined canoes had paused, nearly abreast of his hiding-place. They were closely drawn together, as though the savages were consulting, though noth-

ing more than a faint, subdued murmur came to Caribou Zip's ear. He could not distinguish a single word.

"God have mercy! they must have heard us," murmured Cecile, as she, too, discovered the canoes hovering before their covert. "We are lost!"

"Hist! a single breath may discover us to them," cautioned Zip, bending lower. "I don't believe they have seen us, or surely they would have given chase at once, instead of giving us a chance to slip away through the woods. Keep still—do not breathe above a whisper, and we will give them the go-by yet."

"Too late—they are coming!" gasped Cecile bowing her head in an agony of fear.

"I'll have time to strike *one* blow, anyhow!" muttered Caribou Zip, grasping his rifle, his teeth clenching, his eyes flashing with a peculiar, phosphorescent gleam.

Truly it seemed as though they were lost. The consultation among the Indians had come to an end, and the canoes, as if by common consent, were headed toward shore. In the gloom, it seemed to the fugitives as though the boats were pointed directly toward their leafy covert, and discovery seemed inevitable.

Caribou Zip crouched over the trembling maiden as though he would shield her life with his own. Had the night been less dark, he would have fired at once, so certain did discovery seem, but he held his hand until he could make sure of his aim. It would not be so hard to die if he knew that his death was avenged beforehand.

But the shock for which the young scout braced himself, did not come just then. Instead, he heard the canoes touch the land a few yards to his right, or lower down the lake where the shore was more shelving and easy of ascent. And then, for the first time, he allowed himself to hope—though faintly, at first. Perhaps, after all, they had not been seen—their hasty retreat may not have been heard; the Indians may have landed for some other purpose, totally unconnected with the fugitives.

Breathlessly Caribou Zip listened. Eye-sight could no longer avail him, for the dense foliage upon that side effectually screened the movements of the savages.

He could hear their footsteps, could distinguish faint sounds that told him the Indians were talking, but try as he would, Graham could not make out a single word through which he might guess at their object in landing at this point. Those few minutes were full of torture the most exquisite. Had he been alone, 'twould have been different. Then he could have met craft with craft, cunning with cunning, or, if need be, leap ashore and trust to his remarkable fleetness of foot to elude his enemies. But with Cecile in charge, he could not do this.

Gradually Caribou Zip became convinced that the landing of the Indians was in no wise connected with their presence in the covert. And yet this conviction was gained only through the discovery of a new peril.

He heard a faint, clicking sound, that suddenly ceased. At first he had believed this caused by the cocking of a rifle, but the sound was repeated too often for that. Then a faint light shone through the bushes, and he knew that the Indians had started a fire—that they intended to camp upon the lake shore for the night.

As he saw the light steadily increasing, Caribou Zip cast an uneasy glance out upon the lake's surface. To his horror he saw that the fire was reflected clearly, a broad span of water being revealed as clearly as though shone upon by the noon-day sun. The smallest foreign object upon this lighted circle, could scarcely hope to escape the eyes of the Indians. And this banished the plan that was even then forming itself in his mind; the hope that he might steal away in the canoe, unheard, unseen.

And then as the light was steadily increasing, as the larger sticks of wood ignited, might not it betray the covert to some keen-eyed savage? The fugitives were surrounded by peril, escape seemed impossible.

The Indians, who were a band of mixed tribes, of Ojibwas, Ottawas, Sacs and Menomonies, squatted around the fire, cooking some slices of meat. It may be said here that they were on their way to Fort Michilimackinac; that they were but little better than a band of outlaws, nearly all of them having been degraded and cast out of their tribes. They were led by Sikehos, an Ojibwa. Jean Blanc had formed a con-

nection with them nearly a year previous to the date of this story, and he had found no little profit in it. He had bade Sikahos meet him near the fort, on the 4th of June, and when the two scouts met the Canadian at Boucher's cabin, Blanc was expecting his allies. From some unknown cause, Sikahos was behind time in keeping his appointment.

The time dragged wearily enough to the lovers, whose position, aside from the danger, was far from comfortable, and yet, when he felt that the coming of daylight would render them still more liable to discovery, Caribou Zip felt that the hours were fleeting all too rapidly. The lovers now sat side by side in the canoe, which Graham had secured by thrusting his paddle into the soft bottom. He tried to induce Cecile to sleep, that she might be strengthened to meet whatever trials the future might have in store for her, but in vain. She was too greatly excited by the events of the past few hours to close her eyes.

A bold project gradually formed itself in the young scout's mind, as the Indian camp gradually grew more quiet, as one by one the smokers finished their pipes and lay down to sleep. By this time Graham had seen enough to convince him that the Indians did not dream of an enemy being near, since they kept the fire blazing high, laying around it without thought of placing guards.

"It must be done!" muttered Zip, unconsciously uttering his thoughts aloud. "It is our only chance—besides, Brant will be waiting for us."

"Did you speak to me, dear Zip?" whispered Cecile, cautiously raising her head from his lap.

"No—but, darling, I have decided upon a plan by which we *may* succeed in slipping away."

"You must not run into unnecessary danger—"

"Nor will I—but I see nothing else that can be done. If we stay here until day, those devils will discover us as they come down to their boats. By my plan, we have a fair chance of escape," added Graham.

"What is it?"

"Look out at this opening. You can just see their canoes. There in the shadow cast by the bush, you see the light hardly falls upon them at all. I mean to slip into the water

here, dive to them, then cut them loose and send them adrift, or else scuttle them, I can do it easily with my knife, since they are only bark.

"You would be discovered and killed—"

"Cecile, you must not give way to such fears. Be a brave woman, and hope for the best. I've been thinking these two hours, and can see no other chance of escape. This is a chance—for when the boats are once destroyed, we can make a bold dash out into the lake, and get beyond range of their fire-arms before they realize the truth. Then if they have no boats, we can easily give them the slip."

"But if you *should* be discovered—"

"I've thought of that, too. If I am discovered before I've done the work, I'll shout your name—Cecile. The Indians will not be likely to understand it. Then you must creep to land and try to pass around the camp-fire. Be as cautious as you can, but be *quick*, for it is almost certain that they will—if they do find me—search closely to see if I have any companions, and could not long overlook the canoe. When once you are beyond the fire, return to the lake shore and keep it in sight all the time. Hasten down it as fast as you can, until you reach a narrow point of land running out into the lake, bearing three dead trees, with a large red rock lying between them. There you will find my friend, Joseph Brant. Tell him what may have happened, and say that I bid him take you safe to Detroit, or if that has fallen, to some other place of safety. Say that *his brother* wishes this. Do you understand me Cecile?"

"Yes—but pray do not go! I know from the way that you speak that you do not expect to succeed; and if they discover you at their boats, they will kill you!"

"I *do* expect to succeed, but Cecile, 'tis best always to be prepared for the worst. This is why I have told you what to do in case I am discovered. Promise me faithfully that the moment I call out your name, you will go."

"I will—I promise, since you ask it," faltered Cecile.

"Besides, even then we may escape. I am like a fish in the water, and it will not be hard to give the imps the slip. Then I will make for the shore below and look for you. You see, even then there will be a chance!"

"They will shoot you at once—you only say this to console me," sadly replied the maiden, nestling still closer to her lover, whose lips bent until they touched hers.

"There—be brave—and pray to God that I may succeed," solemnly added Graham, securing his rifle to a limb of the bush above; and then he stepped over the side of the canoe, sinking noiselessly below the surface of the water, disappearing from Cecile's agonized gaze.

Before diving, Caribou Zip had accurately measured his distance, and when he arose to the surface, he could touch the nearest canoe with his outstretched hand. He listened intently, but not a sound betrayed any suspicion upon the Indians' part. His passage had been noiseless.

There was danger in delay, and Graham drew his knife and bent over the canoe. A single effort pushed the blade, haft-deep, through the thin bark. A quick motion completed the job. A section of bark nearly a foot square was severed, being held in place only by a few fibers. And to make matters doubly sure, the scout slit the frail bark in several other places.

In a similar manner he scuttled the second canoe, thus leaving only two more to attend to. His complete success thus far greatly encouraged the young scout, and in his eagerness to finish his task, he overlooked what, under any other circumstances, he must have noticed; that the third canoe set lower in the water than either of the others.

But Caribou Zip did not notice this, and caught hold of the canoe, to help extricate his foot which had sunk several inches in the soft bottom. No sooner had he done this, than, with an exclamation of surprise, an Indian raised his head from the boat, almost touching Caribou Zip, their faces were so close to each other.

This unlooked-for *contretemps* thoroughly surprised Zip, as well as the savage, and for a moment they glared into each other's eyes, scarcely breathing, uttering not a word.

It was certainly a curious freak, this savage choosing to sleep in the canoe, while all his comrades were upon land, but the fact was as recorded. He *was* there, and he had been roused from sleep by the slight jar, as Caribou Zip sought to pull the canoe toward him, the better to operate upon it.

However, this was not to last long. The Indian recognized in the man confronting him, a pale-face, and, being that of a stranger, consequently an enemy. Reasoning thus, he flung out his hands and grappled with the scout, at the same time uttering a shrill yell of alarm that brought the entire party of outcasts upon their feet, wide awake.

This decided action upon the Indian's part, broke the spell that had bound Caribou Zip, as it were, and he made a vicious stroke with the knife he still held, burying the blade deep in the red-man's breast. It was a death-blow, and did not need to be repeated.

Still the savage closed his fingers upon the scout's throat even as the death-shriek burst from his lips. At the same moment he sprung convulsively forward, falling heavily against Graham, knocking him backward, and both bodies sunk beneath the water with a splash.

With a desperate effort Caribou Zip tore himself free from the dead brave's grip, though in doing so it seemed as though the tightly-clenched fingers would tear his entire throat out. And then, raising his head, dashing the water from his eyes, Graham uttered the agreed-upon signal:

"Cecile—beware—I am discovered!"

He did not pause to consider the danger he was running in so plainly indicating his whereabouts to the Indians. He thought first of her, the one who was dearer to his heart than even his own life.

The loud yells and cries of the Indians drowned his last words, and dashing the water from his eyes, Caribou Zip saw that the enemy was rushing toward him. Their bodies were clearly outlined against the glow of the fire-light. Still though they must know about where he was, not one of the savages had distinguished him, as he lay so low upon the water, his head alone being above it.

Even in that moment of peril, Caribou Zip did not forget his main object, and reaching forward, he severed the withe that held the canoe, then flung himself into it in such a manner that the light craft darted away from shore, the impetus being sufficient to carry the scout fairly beyond the line of light cast by the camp-fire. Still such a maneuver could not be executed without being seen and understood, and the In

dians, yelling with rage, discharged their rifles in the direction where the canoe had vanished. Then they rushed down the bank and leaped into the remaining canoes, to pursue the bold thief.

The foremost brave uttered a cry of rage, as he sunk past the knee through the bottom of a canoe. He had stepped upon the place where Caribou Zip had doctored it. At nearly the same moment another brave discovered that his canoe was sinking, and great was the confusion. Every thing seemed favoring Caribou Zip's escape.

Yet such was not the case, though an exultant chuckle passed his lips as he found himself untouched by the rifle-bullets that pattered around him, and saw the circle of fire-light fade behind him. Now if Cecile would only carry out his instructions completely! Surely the Indians would not think of watching the land, also? If not, then she must succeed in passing around the camp, and he would join her some place along the shore, when they could continue their journey as at first intended.

Filled with these thoughts, he groped around in the bottom of the canoe for a paddle. He could hear the Indians still splashing in the water, where their canoes had sunk beneath them, and he felt that he could easily paddle out of ear-shot before they overcame their surprise. But to his horror and dismay, his search was unavailing. There was no paddle in the canoe he had selected!

Possibly the savage had removed them, that they might not interfere with his repose; or they may have fallen overboard during the brief struggle that ended in the warrior's death. At any rate, Caribou Zip found himself afloat without the means of improving his advantage. The sudden reverse was indeed a sore one.

At this moment he heard an exultant yell from the shore, and his heart fairly ceased its throbbings, as he listened for a cry from Cecile. His first thought was that she had been captured in her attempt to follow his instructions. But the cry did not come.

The sounds that followed, convinced Caribou Zip that the Indians had discovered the one sound canoe that he had left, and were preparing to follow him. Indeed, as each brave

was eager to participate in the chase and hastily tried to crowd into the canoe, that it was overturned. Some time was needed to right the bark, and this time was fully improved by the scout.

Only one course remained open to him. To remain in the canoe, meant certain discovery. He must trust to his powers as a swimmer. Knowing this, Caribou Zip slipped over the stern of the canoe, and then pushed it as far from him as possible, turning its bow up the lake. Then he sunk beneath the surface and swam strongly in the opposite direction. When he arose for air, he turned upon his back and simply allowed his lips and nose to appear above the water, still plying both hands and feet.

Caribou Zip had spoken but little more than the truth when he told Cecile that he was as much at home in the water as a fish, for he was really a superb swimmer. The water, though cool, was not chilling, and his clothes did not seem to greatly weigh him down, since, like a true swimmer, he kept very low down in the water.

He could hear the swish of the paddles penetrating the water, sounding as though close beside him, but he was no novice to be deceived by this; at best the Indians could not be less than a hundred yards away.

Caribou Zip, though still swimming strongly, chuckled grimly as he heard the yell of the Indians, telling that they had discovered the missing canoe. But this triumph was of short duration; as they dashed alongside, they saw that it was empty. A second yell, far different in tone, told Graham this.

Knowing now that his ruse was discovered, Caribou Zip struck out vigorously for the shore. He knew that the bank would soon be lined with the Indians, searching for him, and he would be safer when once beyond them, in the forest. He had confidence enough in his own powers as a scout, to feel that he could manage to elude the entire party, once fairly afoot.

The Indians were signaling back and forth—those in the canoe telling their comrades of their discovery, and bidding them spread along shore. But then, just as Graham set foot upon bottom, there came a far different cry—a yell of exultation.

His heart fairly stood still—he seemed suffocating. Right well he knew the significance of that shout; it told of a captive's falling into their hands.

“My God!” he gasped, “they’ve found Cecile!”

CHAPTER VI.

THE FOX SLINKS TO HIS LAIR.

For a time Caribou Zip appeared stupefied by this terrible blow, coming as it did just when he believed himself upon the verge of success.

A cry from the shore above him, roused the young scout. He heard an Indian utter a shout of delight, and then heard his steps as he bounded away toward the spot from whence the exultant yell had proceeded.

A wild, burning anger filled the scout's breast—he lost his wonted coolness, and plunged toward shore, with but one thought—one idea. He would rescue Cecile, or he would die with her. He scrambled up the bank recklessly, yet the very noise that he thus made, served in a measure to recall his long-learned lessons.

He remembered that he was a scout, in the enemy's presence. It was a question of skill and cunning between them. Were they to win, he would be disgraced—in his own estimation, at least.

This reads strangely enough, yet these thoughts *did* flash across the young scout's mind as he surmounted the bank, lying flat upon his stomach, listening intently to learn whether his mad scramble had been heard. He was a thorough scout, inured to danger, cool and quick-witted. After the first moment of frenzy, he saw that the trail he was following could lead only to death for himself without bettering Cecile in the least. For *her* sake he must keep his brain clear and unclouded.

Assured that his hasty scramble up the bank had not been heard through the confusion, Caribou Zip arose and glided

rapidly along, nearing the Indian camp, while increasing his distance from the lake shore. Cool and collected now, Graham knew that this respite would be a brief one. The savages would not be long in discovering their mistake. Cecile could not have killed the brave, nor could she have been the one who stole the canoe. And knowing this, immediate search would be made for the other pale-face.

Though expecting with each moment to hear the signal for the Indians to scatter in quest of the bold thief, Zip glided still closer to the camp-ground, every sense upon the full alert. Yet he was armed only with a knife. His actions seemed foolhardy in the extreme.

The next moment he was peering out upon the camp, from beneath a dense bush. The Indians were grouped together around the fire, one of their number eagerly questioning Cecile, who was standing in their midst, proudly erect, giving no signs of fear. Her lips were firmly closed; not a word did she give in reply to the questions, mixed with threats that were showered upon her. Even in that trying moment, her deep, all-absorbing love shone out for Caribou Zip.

"Ef don't tell, den me kill!" threatened the chief, raising his glittering hatchet.

Cecile made no reply, but quietly bowed her head as if to meet the stroke. An involuntary murmur of admiration ran round the group of warriors. It was not often that they met so brave a squaw as this.

Then one of their number uttered a few rapid words, at the same time touching Cecile's dress. It was dry. Then of course she could not have been the canoe thief, and in questioning her, they were losing valuable time, were allowing the murderer of their brother to escape.

The old warrior was a sensible fellow, but Caribou Zip cursed him bitterly in his heart. He was hastily forming a plan in his mind, but a few more moments were necessary to perfect it.

"Well, since they know I'm around, I'll let Cecile know that I am still safe," thought Caribou Zip, thrusting a finger into his mouth.

A low, tremulous whistle broke the air, abruptly dying

away. The Indians and their captive heard it, and cast a quick, startled glance around. Then the Indians vanished, seeming to melt away, to dissolve into thin air, leaving Cecile standing alone in the center of the little glade.

For a moment Cecile almost yielded to the temptation and even took a step toward the nearest cover, but then reason told her how foolish such an attempt would be. The Indians would either shoot her, or else give chase that could end only in her recapture. And this, too, might be fatal to her lover; so she remained quiet.

The low whistle convinced her that Caribou Zip was still alive and free, and to assure him that his signal was understood, Cecile made a slight gesture. Then she waited, in painful suspense.

Caribou Zip had uttered the signal, fully understanding one fact. A low, brief sound is not easily placed, in the forest. It invariably seems to proceed from a point directly in front of the listener. True, the signal told the Indians their enemy was close at hand, but nothing further. The sound had not lasted long enough for them to locate it accurately.

Satisfied of this, and knowing that the Indians half-believed themselves confronted by a strong force, else they would not have sought cover so quickly, Caribou Zip cautiously began retreating from the spot. Now that all was still, this was a ticklish task, since the faintest rustle, or the cracking of a single twig might suffice to set the enemy upon his trail; but the young scout was equal to the occasion. In perfect silence he reached a point fully one hundred yards back of the camp-fire and then, as if by accident, broke a dead bough of a bush, with a sharp, snapping noise, that he knew must reach the ears of the enemy.

This done, Caribou Zip turned abruptly aside and hastened up the lake shore, gradually nearing the water. By this move he hoped to draw the Indians away from the camp-fire, and, if he could effect nothing else, enable him to regain his rifle from the bushes that had concealed the fugitives in their canoe.

His ruse was successful in part. The Indians did hear the snapping twig, and naturally believing that their enemy was

attempting to escape by flight, and convinced that the scout must be alone, or nearly so, since there had been no attack, they glided forward in hot pursuit. All save the braves who were detailed by Sikahos to guard the captive and the remaining canoes. And these braves, with a due regard for their own skins, had forced Cecile into the bush with them.

Thus it was that Caribou Zip, when he had regained his rifle, stood up in the canoe and peered out upon the glade, saw nothing save the blazing fire. The glade was deserted.

What he would have done next can not be told, for at that moment a wild yell came from the forest, quickly answered by another and another. The three Indians in ambush seemed to understand the meaning of the cries, and emerged from their covert, Cecile accompanying them.

Not a little puzzled, Caribou Zip resigned his rifle for the paddle, and silently pushed the frail barque out upon the lake. He felt that he would be safer upon the water than in the forest, until he could make out what had occurred. As for attempting a rescue now, that would end only in destruction.

Lying low down in the canoe, Caribou Zip slowly worked it out into the lake, only one arm showing over the side. A few moments of this work satisfied him that he was at a safe distance from the enemy, and, lifting his head, Graham peered eagerly toward shore.

The camp-fire blazed up brightly, and the scout could distinctly observe everything within the glade, though he himself was beyond the circle of light. And the sight that met his gaze caused the young scout to start violently, and a bitter, grating curse passed his lips as he half raised his rifle.

Fully a score of figures could be distinguished by the fire-light, some of them red, but a few were of lighter complexion. Among them Caribou Zip had no difficulty in recognizing Jean Blanc, the White Fox.

The renegade stepped up beside Cecile, and evidently spoke to her, though the words were inaudible to the scout. But he saw the maiden avert her head with a gesture of contempt and aversion. In anger Jean Blanc cried:

"You will change that before long, my proud lady! You will be glad to answer me—yes! you will beg and plead for one kind word from my lips before we are done with each other. You are mine, now—mine to deal with as I choose—so beware how you anger me."

It was at this moment that Caribou Zip raised his rifle, the silver drop drawing full upon the renegade's back, as he shook his clenched fist at the maiden. Had the threatened blow fallen that would have been the end of White Fox. But the fist was lowered, and Jean Blanc turned away toward the outcast chief, Sikahos, while two of his followers stood beside Cecile, apparently acting as guard over her.

Jean Blanc spoke rapidly, using the mongrel *patois* made up of French and English and half a dozen Indian dialects, then in common use throughout the lake country. The scout, who had mastered the *patois*, was close enough to catch nearly every word that was spoken.

The renegade first spoke of affairs at the fort, detailed its fall, and the complete success of the allied Ojibwas and Sacs. He added that, while searching for the daughter of old Boucher, he had met an Ottawa, a friend of his, who warned him to give the fort a wide berth for a few days, as Wawatam was very angry, and had vowed to punish those who had stolen a march upon him. There would be blood spilled unless the mad chief was made ample amends.

"And you know he does not bear us any too much good will," added Blanc. "He would want no better excuse than to wipe us out, if we were to cross his path now. So I think it best to lay low for a while; on the island is the best place."

Sikahos had no objections, in as far as keeping out of the way of Wawatam was concerned, but about his share of the plunder? On that score he was troubled.

Jean Blanc promised to satisfy him and his braves, and with this they were forced to be content.

Caribou Zip scarcely knew whether to be pleased with the knowledge that Cecile was not to be taken to the fort. While there, he knew that she would be in a measure safe from the brutality of Blanc, since many of the Canadians knew her well, and would keep her from actual harm at his

hands. On the other side, he knew that it would be next to impossible to effect her escape from there.

Busy with these thoughts, Graham kept close watch upon the enemy. From what he both saw and heard, he knew that a number of the Indians were still out in quest of him, and as the remainder settled down round the camp-fire, he concluded that they would make no further move before day, but await the return of their comrades before returning to their lair.

"It's a risk—but it's got to be done," muttered Caribou Zip, after a deal of thinking. "The chief's head will be worth two of mine in this matter—for when *she* is concerned I can't be cool and clear-witted. I must look him up—he will surely be at the rendezvous by this time."

It was not without some misgivings that Graham began cautiously paddling away from the spot. Would he find the enemy on his return? Would they leave any trail behind them? And *which* island was it that the renegade had alluded to?

Still, as he told himself, the risk must be run, and then he blessed his stars that he had succeeded in destroying some of the canoes. *Some* of the party must travel by land, and their trail would give him the clue needed, should any thing delay his return.

When once the point of land shut out from view the camp-fire, Caribou Zip bent vigorously to his work, for he had a considerable distance to travel and the night was waning fast.

Knowing that the Indians would be most apt to be searching for him *below*, since in that direction lay the nearest English settlements, Caribou Zip kept well out from shore, where, though a keen eye especially directed toward him might discern the course, he felt comparatively safe from observation. In this manner he reached the point of land where he expected to find Thayendanegea awaiting him.

Checking the canoe off the point, Caribou Zip uttered the signal so often made use of between the two scouts, and then listened eagerly for a reply. It came promptly enough, slowly followed by a second; but unluckily this was drowned by the quick fall of Graham's paddle, and the young scout swiftly neared the point.

Just as Caribou Zip ceased his efforts, knowing that the canoe was under sufficient headway to reach land, the rocks before him were lighted up by a bright glare, and a ragged bullet hissed close to his face. The report was mingled with a shrill yell of mortal agony, and then the savage marksman toppled from his perch, into the water below.

"*Howgh—owgh—gh—h!*"

A wild, thrilling cry echoed through the forest, and Caribou Zip recognized the war-whoop of his brother, Thayendanegea. That broke the spell the rifle-shot had cast over him, and paddling rapidly forward he leaped upon the rock-point, with rifle ready cocked.

He saw several dusky figures blended together in a desperate struggle for life or death, their knives and hatchets clashing together with frightful distinctness. And a little to one side, kneeling upon a rock, with bow bent to her ear, an arrow-point turned toward the combatants, was the form of an Indian woman.

Caribou Zip did not hesitate an instant, but leaped forward, dropping his rifle, drawing his knife, uttering a loud cry that told Thayendanegea assistance was at hand. The chief gave a cry in return, and with a desperate effort tore free from his enemies.

Instantly Kalne took advantage of the opening, and her arrow quivered feather-deep in the side of one of the Indians, who sunk to the ground in his death-agonies. And then, singling their foes, the brother scouts engaged the two survivors. The struggle, though desperate, was brief. The savages seemed dismayed by this sudden reinforcement, and ten seconds later the blood-stained rocks received their bodies, while their spirits fled to rejoin those of their brothers upon the Long Trail.

"How is it, chief—you hurt?" eagerly asked Graham.

"A few scratches—nothing more. Bah! the dogs do not know how to strike a *man!*" contemptuously replied Thayendanegea, as he stooped to secure the scalps of the fallen braves.

"I don't understand it. How came they here, and you not know it until after you answered my signal?"

"I have been watching them for ten minutes," was the

quiet reply. "But come—the woods are full of Indians. They will come here to see what is the matter, as soon as they smell the powder."

"Right, chief—come to my canoe. 'Twill hold three—for I see you have got your friend with you," and Caribou Zip warmly grasped Kalne's hand.

"Good! water leaves no trail. But you said *three*?"

"A sad story, chief—but I'll tell you all when we are in a safer place than this. Come."

The trio entered the little canoe and paddled out upon the lake, until assured that no prying eye from shore could make them out in the gloom that told them that daylight was close at hand. And then Caribou Zip related what had occurred to him since their parting.

"We will get the white flower back, or the outcasts shall have two more scalps to dance over," quietly answered Thayendanagea, grasping Caribou Zip's hand.

"But you forget *Ka'ne*—"

"No. Kalne is the child of a chief, and has promised to become the squaw of a chief. She will go with us."

The Indian woman said nothing, but there was a glad, grateful light in her soft eyes as they thanked Brant.

"I knew it—I knew you would not fail me, chief! Now I have some hopes of success. If we can't fool these imps, then we deserve to lose our scalps! But these rascals on the rocks?"

Thayendanagea briefly detailed his adventures of the night. After giving the Ottawas the slip, as detailed in a preceding chapter, the Indian lovers had hastened on to keep the rendezvous. They had waited for several hours, and then the chief had heard the footsteps of some one approaching. Crouching low among the rocks, he waited. Four Indians crept by, unsuspecting his presence. From their speech, Thayendanagea made out that a canoe was coming down the lake, and then the only Indian who bore a rifle stationed himself upon the point, ready for a shot in case the canoe should not land. Suspecting the truth, Thayendanagea prepared for work, creeping forward with ready bow. When Caribou Zip signaled, he replied, adding a note that told of danger. Seeing that the Indian was about to shoot, he sent

an arrow through his back, just in the nick of time. The others discovered him, and then came the struggle, in which Kalne and Caribou Zip bore a part.

During these explanations, the scout had been paddling upstream, and seeing that day was faintly breaking, they steered in toward shore, looking for a covert where they might lie in safety until such of the enemy as might have passed below to the point, had returned. It was reluctantly enough that Zip brought himself to lie idle so long, while Cecile was in the clutches of the White Fox, but there was nothing else to be done. Once caught between two fires, their trail discovered, the result would be any thing but pleasant.

And thus they waited, until the gray light of dawn gradually increased, until the broad, tranquil sheet of water glowed with the rosy light of morning.

CHAPTER VII.

THE HUMAN SERPENT.

BUT all things mundane must have an end, and as the sun rose higher into the heavens, Caribou Zip stepped upon shore, followed by Kalne and Thayendanegea. Marking the spot where the canoe was concealed, Graham led the way through the tangled woods. He was once more himself, and if Cecile was lost, 'twould be through no carelessness or oversight on his part.

Nearing the point where Cecile had been captured, the two scouts increased their caution, leaving Kalne behind. But the spot was deserted by all save themselves, and a faint signal from Thayendanegea told that he had found the trail.

Comparing notes, the brothers decided that the party of outcasts and their pale-faced allies had separated, one portion taking to the two canoes, while the remainder journeyed by land. As her trail could not be found, it was decided that Cecile had left in one of the boats, as it was not likely

that the Indians would have taken the trouble to carry her.

"See! the trail is broad and fresh; let us go," briefly ejaculated Thayendanegea.

"But—if they have separated here for good—if the trail leads to the fort instead of the island!"

"They are outlaws. They will not thrust their scalps into Wawatam's hand."

"Right! I am growing a perfect fool—but you can feel for me, chief. If it was any other than Cecile, I would be a man; but whenever I get to thinking—"

"Only think about the enemy—think how many scalps they should pay for the trouble they are causing us," quietly interrupted Brant, as, after a faint signal to Kalne, he took up the freshly-imprinted trail, following it with ease.

This trail led them some four or five miles up the lake shore, passing beyond two of the small islands, without a halt or break. But when nearing the third, the trail bent sharply toward the water. Using all possible caution, the scouts glided on, until, covered by a scrubby bush, they looked out upon the end of the trail. Upon a bit of sand was plainly imprinted the toe of a moccasin, and beside it was a mark as though the prow of a canoe had rested there.

"You see!" muttered Thayendanegea, with a significant nod. "Water leaves no trail, but our friends are yonder—and with them is the white flower."

"You may be right, chief, no doubt you are, since the sign reads plain enough that way—but what are we to do? They are ten to our one, with the position in their favor, too!" gloomily replied Caribou Zip.

"The odds will be less, before another sun. But we must wait—there can nothing be done until after dark. We must work under cover."

Caribou Zip covered his eyes with a groan of bitter agony. He had still reason enough left to see that the chief spoke true—that any steps taken before the shades of night lent their friendly cover, would be worse than useless. And yet, to leave poor Cecile in the hands of that vile brute—helplessly at the mercy of the White Fox—the thought was almost killing.

The island was a small, densely-wooded one, about a third of a mile from the main land, and as the brother scouts gazed eagerly at it, not a trace of human life rewarded them. The island appeared unoccupied. Yet this must be the retreat alluded to by Jean Blanc, since it was the last island upon that side of the lake, excepting Mackinaw Island, and that lay too near the fort to have been selected as a safe refuge by the outcasts.

/ Satisfied that their enemies were fairly run to ground, the scouts retreated to a safer cover, and then consulted earnestly. Then they separated, Thayendanegea returning to where Kalne was patiently awaiting him, while Caribou Zip quickly selected a tall but heavily-limbed tree, which he cautiously climbed, taking care to leave no trace behind him that might betray his covert to a passing enemy.

Graham ensconced himself high up among the dense foliage, where, while having a tolerably comfortable seat, he could peer out and over the tree-tops, having a fair view of the island. Thus no person could land upon or leave the island without his knowledge. And as he could not catch even the faintest glimpse of the ground below, there was little danger of being observed by any Indian who might chance to pass by.

In this manner the long day wore on, with but one incident to break the dull, yet painful monotony. That was the passage of several canoes down the lake. They were well loaded, and seemed to contain captive pale-faces, beside the Indian braves.

Though not intimately connected with this story, the reader may be interested in the sequel. A short distance below this point, the canoes were hailed by an Indian, who asked them who their captives were, and what had occurred. Some conversation followed; during which the canoes approached the shore, where the water was quite shallow. Then with a loud yell, the Ottawas, led by Wawatam, broke cover, and rushing into the lake, captured the entire party. The captives were released and taken ashore, despite the remonstrances of the Ojibwas. Wawatam quickly silenced them by asking why they had played him false in attacking the fort without sending him word, threatening to punish their treachery by

death, unless they kept quiet. Then the Ottawas launched their canoes and made their way to Michilimackinac, taking full possession of the fort. Though the allied Sacs and Ojibwas growled some, they did not attempt to resist by force of arms. Afterward a council was held, during which both sides of the case were argued, ending in the Ottawas returning the captives taken from the Ojibwas, the latter returning to their village, leaving the Ottawas in possession of the fort. For some time the prisoners were treated with tolerable clemency, but then, when a noted war-chief returned, he entered the prison-lodge and murdered seven of the soldiers, and then—though it may seem incredible—the bodies were roasted and devoured; a superstitious rite, adopted, as they think, to increase their courage and hardihood.*

The night, though still and calm, descended dark and gloomy. A dense haze seemed to shroud the heavens, and a storm was brewing. Yet the two scouts congratulated each other upon this fact, since darkness was just what they required to aid them in their bold plan, if plan it might be called.

Caribou Zip descended from his perch as twilight fell, no one having left the island during the day, though several times he had caught glimpses of Indians upon its edges. He and Thayendanegea consulted together upon what should be done. Finally it was decided that the chief should swim out to the island, and endeavor to learn the exact position of affairs there. After this, he was to be guided by circumstances. Caribou Zip was to take Kalne and return for their canoe, in which he was to hover around the island, awaiting the signals of Thayendanegea, of which a complete code had been arranged.

Naturally enough, Caribou Zip had insisted upon being the one to visit the island, but this Brant would not agree to. He said that a lover was not to be trusted in such a position, and stated the truth so forcibly that Graham could but acknowledge he was right. This was as far as their plans extended, because the future could not be anticipated.

"I won't tell you to do your best, chief," muttered Caribou Zip, when Thayendanegea had prepared for the task before him, by stripping to the skin save for the narrow breech

* Parkman's Pontiac.

clout. "You know what I feel in this. If Cecile is not secured, then my life is worth nothing to me."

"Your heart is my heart—for we are *brothers*," simply replied Brant. "I will do all that man can to set the white flower free. And until she is once more in your arms, my feet will keep to this trail until it leads to the grave of a chief."

"I know your true heart well enough without the words, Joseph—I know you will not fail me now. Go, then, and may the Great Spirit help you to success."

The brothers clasped hands warmly, and then Caribou Zip turned aside while the lovers parted. Yet this parting was very simple. Not a word was spoken, Thayendanegea drew Kalne tightly to his breast, and then their lips met. That was all.

Baring no weapons save the knife that hung round his neck by a stout thong, Thayendanegea descended the bank and entered the water. A single wave of his hand to his friends, then he dove beneath the surface and disappeared from their eager gaze.

With long, powerful strokes, the chief rapidly lessened the distance between him and the island. As yet he could see nothing of it, through the darkness, but he had located it so thoroughly that he knew he was heading in the right direction. And then he caught sight of it, looming up before him, dim and indistinct.

Now swimming less strongly, Thayendanegea strained his eyes toward the island, listening intently. But nothing met his eyes save the gentle, never ending ripple of the miniature waves upon the island beach.

Bending to the right, the chief swam cautiously on as though intending to pass entirely round the island. And this he doubtless would have done, only for the faint glow of a camp-fire meeting his gaze just as he rounded the lower point of land.

Though expecting this, Thayendanegea had resolved to run no chances; now he knew in just what quarter to look for the enemy. They had built their fires where the glow could be seen only from the lake; the dense shrubbery and trees concealed all glimmer from the main land.

Turning back, Thayendanegea approached the land from a point almost directly opposite the fire, using the utmost care not to arouse any watchers by the faintest noise. And then, lying flat upon the sand, covered all but his head by the water, he listened. Not a sound could be heard.

Could the Indians have abandoned the island, after Caribou Zep ceased watching? That did not seem likely, yet this perfect silence was any thing but reassuring. Besides, if the enemy were still there, this would render his object still more difficult, as he knew nothing of the ground, and in the gloom might easily make a false step.

But Thayendanegea, even in those early days, gave evidence of a courage that no peril could daunt. 'Twould be no common obstacle that could turn him aside from the trail he had marked out for his feet to follow.

Silently as a human serpent, the chief dragged himself forward, and then entered the shrubbery before him. Here his progress was slow and difficult. Every inch of ground was thoroughly tested, every twig and leaf was carefully removed from his path, each branch was carefully bent aside, then eased back to its natural position as soon as he had passed beyond.

The chief had only proceeded a few yards, when the low hum of human voices met his ear. A grim smile lit up his face, for this told him that his former suspicions were wrong. In fact the island was longer than he had expected, and this, added to the natural caution of the outcasts, who knew that every man's hand was raised against them, prevented the sound of their voices reaching the chief's ear while he listened on the water.

Passing through the shrubbery, Thayendanegea unexpectedly found himself in a little grass-covered glade, entirely free of bushes, only a narrow belt separating it from the beach. Across this he was gliding, when a footfall came to his ear, sounding close at hand. Then he heard a low growling as though some one was muttering discontentedly to himself.

There was not time for him to glide back to cover, so Thayendanegea lay still, trusting in the deep gloom to hide his presence, only removing the knife from round his neck. Just as he grasped the horn haft firmly, the bushes parted

and a man stumbled into the glade. Only the fierce, half-drunken curse that broke from his lips, told the chief that one of the Canadian renegades confronted him; only a dim, phantom-like outline told the position of his body.

"He's a fool for thinking any one would come here—and I'm a fool for obeying such an order! Keep a watch. What's the use? For little I'd—hallo!"

This exclamation was caused by his fairly stumbling across the extended form of Brant, and, half-drunk, the Canadian fell to his knees, one hand resting upon the smooth, cool back of the chief.

"A Injun—you drunken dog—!"

These words were the last that ever passed his lips. With irresistible force, the chief rose and grappled with the drunkard, flinging him upon his back, the sharp blade pressed fast deep in his heaving chest, a strong hand clutching his throat, effectually stifling the death-gurgle that might otherwise have aroused the enemy. And then Thayendangea held the ill-fated renegade until every motion was forever still.

"His heart is black, though his skin may be white," muttered Brant, after listening to assure himself that the momentary struggle had not alarmed the enemy; "and his scalp shall hang at the lodge-pole of a chief!"

The scalp was torn off and thrust into the chief's breech-clout; then he lifted the corpse and thrust it into the shrubbery, satisfied that it would tell no tales before morning, and by that time he hoped to be miles distant, his object fully accomplished.

Thayendangea resumed his progress, and half an hour later found himself upon the edge of the glade in which the camp-fires of the Outcasts were built. It was a curious scene, and for some time Brant studied it.

Over a score of Indians were gathered around the fires, lolling at ease, smoking their pipes, all evidently more or less under the influence of liquor, a ten-gallon keg of which stood beside the center fire. To one side were half a dozen white men, listening to the low words of Jean Blanc. A few yards beyond these, stood a small oil-cloth tent. The door-flap was raised, and inside this Thayendangea could

ust distinguish the outlines of a human figure. Beyond a doubt this was the white flower.

Marking the spot well, Thayendanegea cautiously retreated for a few yards until beyond earshot, and then glided around to approach the tent from the rear, or that quarter furthest from the White Fox. If he could only succeed in whispering a few words to the white flower, the difficulty of his task would be greatly lessened. So reasoned the chief.

None other than an adroit scout and wood ranger could have passed through that tangled mass of undergrowth, with the silent celerity that marked the progress of Brant. The velvet-pawed panther, a veritable snake might have taken a lesson in their own art from this human serpent.

Unheard, unsuspected, Thayendanegea gained the rear of the tent, and after hesitating for a moment, he gently scratched upon the canvas wall, at the same time imitating the signal—so dear, so often heard with throbbing heart—that had, in the happy days now gone by, told Cecile her lover was waiting her coming.

The signal was faint—scarcely raised above the breath—yet Brant knew it had been heard. A quick start from within told him this. And then he repeated it, though almost trembling lest Cecile should mar all by a forgetful cry or exclamation.

But at that moment the voice of Jean Blanc was heard, and the maiden was reminded of what would befall her lover should he be discovered there, and with a violent effort, she choked down her new-born joy, biting her lips till the blood came.

Then she noiselessly moved herself back until her lips were close to the canvas wall through which the sound had proceeded. How her heart throbbed as she uttered:

“Dear Zip, is that you?”

The point of a knife blade glided noiselessly across the canvas, and with his lips to this slit, Thayendanegea replied:

“Zip is well and working for the white flower. He sends his brother to bid you be brave and keep ready for the signal. Before day comes again, your hearts will beat together, and we will be far away from here.”

“I thank you, Joseph,” whispered Cecile, yet feeling a lit-

He was disappointed that Caribou Zip had not come instead. "I will be ready—I would dare any thing to escape from *that* devil's power. He has threatened me most shamefully since he brought me here."

"I'll take his scalp—"

"No—run no unnecessary risks now—the time will come, no doubt, when he will receive his reward. But Zip—you are sure he is well?"

"Yes. I will go now. Zip will think I've gone to sleep. Keep ready and listen for me here. But I must clip the wings of these buzzards first, or they may annoy us just when we'd rather not see them. Good-by."

Without waiting for an answer, Brant slipped away from the tent and once more resumed his scouting. He worked now with a lighter heart, since he had the end fairly in view, while prospects seemed bright for his complete success. First to clip the wings of the buzzards, as he had told Cecile, then to slip away with the white flower. The chief had altogether changed his plans since gaining the island. What had been proposed, now seemed too full of risk.

Thayendanegea at once made his way to the edge of the water, and entered it, lying flat upon his stomach. In this position he half swam, half dragged himself along close to the shore, skirting the island, examining every cover that could possibly contain the canoes of the party of outcasts. By clipping the wings, Brant meant scuttling their canoes, so as to delay pursuit if discovered in his bold attempt at rescue.

At length he was successful in his search. The canoes—five in number, three others having been picked up by the way to replace those destroyed by Caribou Zip—were snugly moored upon the lake-side of the island, in a little cove completely overshadowed by trees and creepers.

Thayendanegea lost no time in getting to work, for the night was fleeting rapidly, several hours having passed since he reached the island. With his knife he slit up the bottoms of four canoes, in such a manner that, while they might float for a time, ten pounds weight would cause them to fill and sink in as many seconds. Into the last canoe he placed several stout paddles, and then, catching the bark rope betwixt his teeth Brant swam noiselessly away from the cove.

Though eyesight had been of less service to him during that scouting than the sense of touch, Thayendanegea had gained a pretty thorough knowledge of the island, and was not long in choosing the point at which to leave the canoe while he returned for Cecile.

Landing at a point nearly opposite the cove where he had found the boats, Thayendanegea placed the canoe beneath a scrubby bush, marking the place well. Then he turned to enter the shrubbery.

At this moment a wild yell came to his ears, and wheeling quick as thought, the chief saw a bright jet of flame just vanishing amidst the gloom. Then came the report of a rifle, and he knew that Caribou Zip was in trouble. He had heard the young scout's rifle speak too often to mistake its voice.

Thayendanegea took one step toward the canoe, as if to fly at once to his friend's assistance, but then as he heard the sound of excited voices behind him, he remembered his pledge to Cecile, and glided into the undergrowth, just in time to escape the foremost of the outcasts who had rushed to the shore to see what the matter was.

Like a true scout, Brant promptly seized upon the advantage, and knowing that, even if heard, his footsteps would excite no suspicion when all the outcasts were hastening to and fro, he rapidly made his way to the tent. The glade seemed entirely deserted, and stooping, he repeated the agreed-upon signal. It was promptly answered by Cecile.

Thayendanegea quickly drew his knife across the canvas, making a hole large enough for Cecile to pass through, and then grasping her hand, with a hastily muttered caution, he led the way into the darkness.

He used more caution now, for a collision with any of the band would be fatal, since Cecile was the only woman upon the island. Once they narrowly escaped, a man brushing past them so closely that either could have touched him with an extended hand. Even in the gloom, Thayendanegea recognized the White Fox. Had Cecile not been with him, that moment would have been fatal to Jean Blanc.

A few steps further and the chief paused just within the edge of the undergrowth. He could hear the mutterings of the outcasts, and knew that they were standing upon the

shore. It would be dangerous to venture out now, and yet every moment was precious.

"Ha! we are discovered—listen!" suddenly muttered Thayendanegea.

A loud, angry yell came from the direction of the glade, and he knew that the White Fox had discovered the flight of his captive. The Indians also read the cry aright, and instantly sprung back into the undergrowth, scattering to the right and left, to intercept the fugitive.

One of the warriors fairly ran against Thayendanegea in the darkness. The chief clutched at his throat, at the same time dealing him a vicious thrust. The knife blade sunk home, but as the death-stricken brave sunk back, his wild, unearthly yell rung out with startling distinctness. There could be no mistaking that frightful cry. The alarm was given.

"Quick—white flower—here!" muttered Brant, seizing Cecile in his strong arms and leaping out to where the canoe awaited them.

Dropping Cecile in the bottom, Thayendanegea entered also, sending the frail bark far out from shore. Then clutching the paddle he plied it vigorously, at the same time uttering his wild, thrilling war-whoop, as if daring the outcasts to follow him.

A chorus of angry yells answered him.

CHAPTER VIII.

TRUE TO HIS COMRADE.

WHEN Thayendanegea dove and disappeared from his sight, Caribou Zip turned to the Indian girl.

"Will Kalne go with me, or wait here until I can bring back the canoe?" he asked, speaking the *patois*.

"The chief said Kalne must go with Caribou," quietly replied the Indian maiden, intently gazing out upon the lake, as though in the hope of discerning her lover—but the deep gloom prevented this.

"It may be best—at any rate we'll lose no time in looking for each other. Well," added the young scout after a moment's pause, during which he peered wistfully in the direction of the island, "since the chief has fairly begun his work, we may as well set about ours. You must carry Brant's bow, Kalne; I have his rifle. Keep close behind me, and remember that Wawatam has longing eyes upon our scalps."

Kalne made no reply, but trod close upon Caribou Zip's footsteps as he started off through the forest, heading toward the point where they had left their canoe. They both knew the value of time now, since, as they then believed, Thayendanegea would be wholly dependent upon them for means of leaving the island in case he succeeded in rescuing the white flower from the hands of the renegade, and hence it was absolutely necessary that they should be ready in waiting for the young chief's first signal.

Caribou Zip had spoken nothing more than the truth when he said that he was not himself when the welfare of Cecile Boucher was concerned. In his anxiety for her he forgot his wonted coolness, and acted more like a hot-blooded greenhorn than a wary, experienced scout, gliding along at a reckless pace, forgetting caution in his haste, only thinking of gaining the canoe in the shortest possible time.

Even Kalne, though busily thinking of Brant, felt a little uneasiness at this recklessness, knowing as she did that one might expect to meet an enemy at any step; but it was not the province of a squaw to caution a warrior.

But Caribou Zip was soon roused from his fit of forgetfulness, and made to realize the folly he had been guilty of. He ran full against a scrubby bush, falling over it, headlong, and found himself sprawling at full length in a shallow ditch or hollow. He did not attempt to arise, but lay motionless as death, listening intently. While falling a significant sound had met his ear—or was it mere fancy? Had he really heard a half-stifled exclamation? Unless his ears had deceived him, such a sound came out the darkness, only a few yards distant.

Now at least Caribou Zip was wide awake, once more the acute, cunning scout. With hand upon knife-hilt, he listened

intently, fairly stilling his breath. A faint hiss sounded from above him, but that reassured, instead of alarming him, for he knew it proceeded from Kalne's lips. It told him, too, that she must have heard the suspicious sound, else she would have spoken aloud. Then he replied to her signal, imitating the hiss of the land-moccasin.

A moment later Caribou Zip detected a faint rustling sound coming from in front. The person who had uttered the little exclamation, was stealthily creeping forward, no doubt bent upon investigating the noise he had heard.

Caribou Zip congratulated himself upon one fact. He knew that the enemy were not in force, from the caution and silence observed. If otherwise, he would have heard signals, the advance would have been bolder. And reasoning thus, he drew his stout knife, ready for work in case he was discovered.

For a minute at a time the rustling would cease, and all be still as death; then it would be resumed, creeping nearer, inch by inch. Not the slightest trial to the young scout was this vexatious loss of time, when every moment was so valuable. The minutes lost here might prove the destruction of Brant and Cecile. Had he been alone, Graham would have leaped forward and trusted to fortune and the lightness of his heels to carry him through in safety. But he could not desert Kalne. Brant's charge must not be betrayed, and this thought kept him quiet.

For over a minute not a sound had reached the young scout's ears, and he could only guess at the position of his enemy. But then a sudden, quavering cry broke the air, apparently coming from directly overhead. Though startled by its clearness, Caribou Zip recognized the signal, as uttered by an Ottawa, asking—who are you?

Graham could not, on the spur of the moment, recollect the answering note that would proclaim him an Ottawa; but it was too late. From a short distance behind him came the correct signal, duplicated from a dozen different points.

A peculiar thrill came over the scout's frame. He knew that he was in the midst of bloodthirsty, relentless savages. That had been an unfortunate stumble.

His signal being so promptly answered, the Ottawa rose erect and advanced boldly, doubtless attributing the noise he had heard to one of his fellow warriors. The result was curious enough.

The Indian planted his foot upon the very edge of the ditch, not seeing it in the gloom, and as the soft dirt gave way, he fell heavily in a sitting posture, alighting fairly upon the back of Caribou Zip. To say that both were astonished, is a mild way of expressing their feelings, but Caribou Zip recovered first.

With a quick, agile movement he unseated the Ottawa, and then brought his knife down heavily. Though a chance stroke the weapon dealt a death-wound, and shrieking horribly in his agony, the brawny warrior plunged forward, tearing the rich leaf mold with his fingers and teeth.

For a brief instant all was still and breathless save for the convulsive struggles and gasping groans of the doomed brave. But then the forest depths rung with the loud, shrill yells of the Ottawas, as they leaped toward the spot, eager to solve the mystery—for such it was to their minds as yet.

They found the still quivering body of their comrade, but nothing more. No living being save themselves appeared to be in the vicinity. Gradually a sensation of awe began stealing over them. There was something in this affair they could not understand.

And yet at that moment, Caribou Zip and Kalne were stealthily creeping away, not fifty yards distant. In their excitement, the Indians had unconsciously aided the fugitives to escape by jabbering loudly, effectually drowning the sound of their cautious footfalls.

Unfortunately for our friends, at least one of the Ottawas possessed more common sense than superstition, and hastily strack a blaze with flint, steel and punk, the latter being attached to a bit of splintered, resinous pine, which quickly ignited beneath the nursing breath. This torch, though so small and puny, was still sufficient for its purpose. By its light the Ottawa was not long in solving the mystery. He saw where Caribou Zip had fallen, where Kalne had rested beside the bush; and then, below the spot where lay the dead

warrior, he distinguished the trail left by the fugitives when they stole away.

All was plain enough now. More than one of the party recognized the small moccasin-print—they knew that Kalne, the Oneida girl, had passed here. And with her, of course, was the bold abductor, who had cast dirt into the faces of the entire Ottawa tribe.

Almost unconsciously, a yell of angry triumph broke from their lips. It seemed to relieve their feelings, in a manner but it alarmed Caribou Zip, as well. It told him that the avengers of blood were upon his trail.

"Come, Kalne," he muttered, between his teeth, taking her hand. "The dogs have found our trail. Only that the chief expects us, we could easily give them the slip in the dark. As it is, we must run for it."

Kalne made no reply, but glided forward lightly, keeping pace with him. Instead of a squaw, she should have been a warrior.

The Ottawas adopted a plan of procedure that is seldom made use of—never in an enemy's country. Two-thirds of their number darted off in the direction taken by the fugitives, spreading out, as they ran, to cover more ground, as well as to lessen the risk of overlapping and destroying the trail. The remainder hastily procured torch-wood, and lighting these, carefully followed the trail, foot by foot.

This made escape seem impossible. If the fugitives fled at full speed, then they would make noise enough to betray their whereabouts to the runners; if they used more caution, the advance party would pass them and place themselves in ambush, ready to fall upon their prey when the trailers should rouse them from their covert.

Caribou Zip had not fled half a mile before he heard the crashing footsteps of his pursuers, and knowing that Kalne could not hope to compete with the nimble-footed braves, he relaxed his speed and looked around for cover. This was easily found in the forest, where darkness alone would hide them, and crouching down beside a fallen tree, the fugitives fairly held their breaths as the Ottawas passed by, plainly heard, though unseen. And then the sounds of their footsteps died away in the distance.

Still Caribou Zip did not immediately resume his flight. He was busy thinking what best to do. Were he alone, this would have been easily answered; but Kalne was a sacred charge—doubly so now, that Thayendanegea was risking *his* life to free Cecile.

"You can swim, Kalne?" he suddenly asked.

"Yes—very fast, but not far," she replied.

"That settles it, then; with my help, you can make the point where we left the canoe; it is not more than a mile further. Come—keep close to me, and remember that the Ottawas are hungry for scalps."

Turning sharply to the left, Caribou Zip struck out for the lake-shore. Listen as he might, he could hear nothing of his enemies. All was still and quiet, save for the mournful sighing of the wind among the tree-tops. The clouds were more broken now, and an occasional rift of light could be seen through the tangled foliage above.

In a few minutes the shore was gained, and then Caribou Zip began groping around for a stick or log large enough to support his fire-arms and ammunition. Besides lending Kalne what assistance she might require, he intended pushing this float before him until the canoe was reached.

Unfortunately, this search could not be made without some noise, and the rustling, crackling sounds met the ear of one of the Ottawas, who had taken his position near the shore. Suspecting the truth, he glided forward, guided by ear alone, and before either suspected the other's proximity, he fairly ran against Kalne. The Indian girl gave a little cry of alarm—the Ottawa a grunt of astonishment, for the sounds he had heard came from several yards beyond; but instantly recovering himself, he struck a vicious blow with his hatchet.

Uttering a faint, gasping noise, Kalne sunk bleeding at his feet.

Caribou Zip heard the collision, the cry, the heavy blow, and then heard Kalne fall to the ground, moaning. It was a riddle easily read, and his answer was quite as prompt.

Like a maddened panther, he leaped toward the spot, though eyesight availed him but little, and the next moment was grappling fiercely with the savage, who, taken by surprise

made a hurried, ineffectual blow at the scout, losing his hatchet from the very force of his stroke.

When feeling the scout's powerful arms wound around him, bending him backward with resistless force, the Ottawa raised voice for the first time, and gave the alarm in a shrill, piercing yell. From the forest came answering yells, and knowing that if caught now, he could only expect death, Caribou Zip threw the whole of his strength and skill into the effort, hurling the savage to the ground like a child, falling heavily upon him. Stunned, breathless, the Indian offered little resistance, and a swift, deadly thrust ended his war-trail forever.

Panting from the violence of his exertions, Graham arose. He could hear the yells and signals of the Indians, as they tore through the underbrush, and knew that the next few minutes must decide the matter.

Even in that moment of extreme peril, he was true to his comrade; though he fully believed Kalne was dead, he would not abandon his charge. In a moment he had her in his arms, and leaped down the bank.

There was a narrow strip of sandy beach at this point, but wide enough for his purpose. Until actually obliged, he would not render his rifle useless by plunging into the water. As for Thayendanegea's gun, it lay where he had placed it when searching for the float.

Caribou Zip ran rapidly along this narrow strip, Kalne lying still and motionless upon his shoulder. From the limp, dead weight, Graham believed he bore a corpse. He could feel the warm blood soaking through his shirt. Still, he never once thought of abandoning her, even when the wild, angry chorus of yells, from the point he had just left, told him the body of his victim had been found. He only pressed on with increased speed, knowing that his only hope lay in reaching the canoe. Once in that, he could easily give them the slip.

The distance was less than a mile, and believing he could accomplish this before the savages could overtake him, since they would first have to find out which way he had fled, Caribou Zip glided forward as rapidly as possible, burdened as he was. The moist sand hardly gave forth a sound, as his moccasined feet fell upon it; but Graham knew that he would have to surmount a serious obstacle, ere long.

While trailing the outcasts that morning, he had noticed quite a pile of driftwood lodged against a tree that had fallen into the lake. The fierce storms that so frequently sweep over the lakes, had tossed this driftwood high above water, forming an awkward place to cross, and Caribou Zip knew that he would lose time here, unless he chose either to swim around, or take to the woods. The first would render his rifle useless for a time, and the other would be dangerous now that so many enemies were afoot.

Reasoning thus, Graham began climbing over the pile. He had passed nearly half over it, when a wild yell from the forest, almost directly opposite, startled him, and turning his head quickly, one foot slipped and he fell heavily down through a hole in the pile. Bruised, half-stunned, he lay motionless for a moment. Kalne had fallen heavily upon him.

The sound of voices upon the bank aroused his scattered senses, and to his horror, Caribou Zip heard the speakers begin descending the bank. Had they heard his fall? Did they suspect his whereabouts?

With these questions ringing through his brain, Graham sought to arise, resolved to make a strong fight for life. As he outstretched his hand, he found that he had partially fallen into a hollow log, through a screen of dried leaves, sticks and moss. Fearing to move, lest he should make noise enough to alarm the Indians, he lay motionless, scarcely daring to breathe. Listening, he could hear the scrambling sound of men slipping, sliding down the steep bank.

At this moment he felt Kalne move feebly, and heard a faint sigh sound in his ears. At first his only sensation was joy—joy that the loved one of his brother had not been killed; but then he feared lest her moans of returning consciousness should reach the ears of the Indians above.

“Kalne, for the love of God! don’t speak—the Indians are upon us!” he whispered, mechanically.

Whether she understood his words or not, the Indian maiden was silent. Perhaps she had again swooned.

Then came a peculiar cry from up the lake, and the Indians who had now reached the drift, answered it. Caribou Zip fairly held his breath with suspense.

CHAPTER IX.

UPON THE LAKE.

IMMEDIATELY after replying to the yell from above, the Indians began clambering over the drift-pile, each moment nearing the spot where Caribou Zip lay, until, with a thrill of horror, he heard one's foot slip directly over him. A piece of rotten bark fell upon the scout's back, but the Indian recovered himself by a desperate effort, and then passed on.

Graham could hardly believe that he had escaped discovery, even when he heard the footfalls of the savages growing more and more indistinct, then suddenly cease as they leaped from the edge of the drift to the smooth, sandy beach. Dame Fortune was in a capricious mood on that night, one moment smiling, the next frowning blackly.

Caribou Zip listened intently, but could hear nothing of his enemies. The yells from above had ceased. In a cautious tone he spoke to Kalne. To his joy she replied in a much stronger voice than before, and then cautiously drew herself back until free from the hollow.

The scout's first thought was of his rifle, and to his great delight, this was found in good order, despite the awkward fall.

"But you, Kalne—you are hurt bad?"

"No—my head hurts, but I am stronger now."

Caribou Zip gently passed his hand over her head. He found a long gash upon the back, a lump above it. The Ottawa had overreached his blow, the tomahawk handle striking where he intended the blade to fall, and though the shock was enough to stun Kalne, no serious wound was made.

Graham lost no more time, but cautiously clambered down to the edge of the drift and felt around until he found a half-decayed log that a slight effort rolled over into the water. Upon this he secured his rifle, and helping Kalne into the water, directed her to support herself by holding to the log,

at the same time shoving the float from the drift. Grasping one end with his hands, swimming low down in the water, Caribou Zip found that he could send it along with considerable speed. If slower, this way was by far the surest, since the bank was now difficult traveling, and the Indians must be hard at hand.

As he swam on, Caribou Zip heard the signals of the Ottawas upon land, sounding from different points, and a new fear seized upon him. What if some of them should stumble upon his canoe? That would be a bitter blow indeed. Not only would it render their escape almost impossible, but it would also embarrass Thayendanegea.

Hurriedly Caribou Zip whispered this dread to Kalne, and then bade her remain perfectly still while he swam on and secured the canoe. He could easily find the float again, since the wind was not high enough to give it much drift. Still, to run no unnecessary risks, he arranged a signal by which Kalne might know who to answer.

Thus, swimming low down, the young scout left the float and darted down the lake. He knew that the distance was short—scarcely an eighth of a mile—and though he could still hear the Indians signaling each other, he believed he could reach the covert before them, if the canoe had not yet been found.

Drawing in closer to shore as the spot was neared, Caribou Zip was forced to use more caution, for he could hear several savages conversing together upon the bank, directly above where the boat had been hidden. If annoying, in one sense, this encouraged him in another. If the Indians had discovered the canoe, and suspected it belonged to the fugitives, they would have placed themselves in ambush, keeping perfect silence, rather than disputing so earnestly.

A few moments more of alternate swimming and floating, carried Zip to the covert, and to his joy he found the canoe just as it had been left, the paddles still within it. He severed the bark rope, and entering, grasped the paddle. Then he paused for a moment.

It would be almost impossible for him to take the canoe through the leafy screen and out upon the lake without making noise enough to startle the Indians above. Then why

not turn this fact to his own advantage, by misleading the enemy? Naturally, unless their suspicions were aroused, they would conclude the fugitives would endeavor to make their way *down* the lake, as in that direction lay all the English settlements. By letting them know that he had passed this point, Caribou Zip trusted the entire force would be drawn off in that direction, leaving the coast clear above, when the scouts would only have the outcasts to deal with.

With this object in view, Caribou Zip dipped his paddle deep and sent the canoe through the leafy screen and out upon the lake like an arrow fresh from the bow, leading diagonally down stream. As anticipated he was overheard, a yell of angry surprise from the Indians upon the bank proclaiming as much. Caribou Zip, as though so greatly excited as to forget caution and skill, paddled heavily, making considerable noise and splashing the water like a novice, though sending the bark along at a rapid rate.

The warning cries of the Indians told the scout they had fallen into his trap, and then he whirled the canoe around, plying the paddle noiselessly, swiftly nearing the spot where he had left Kalne. Despite the darkness, he did not make a mistake, and a minute later the Indian girl was safely in the canoe, her bath having fully revived her. In securing his rifle, Zip was not a little surprised at finding Brant's bow beside it. Kalne, even during her insensibility had not lost it from her shoulder. This weapon, with the well-filled quiver, would be invaluable in case the chief's rifle could not be found. Graham resolved to land in quest of it, though aware that there might be danger in the venture. The weapon was too valuable to be lost without an effort for its recovery.

Keeping at a safe distance from land, so that the keenest eyed savage could not detect the passage of the shadowy canoe, nor the sharpest ear catch the light dip of the paddle, Caribou Zip sped along until near the point where he had been surprised by the Ottawa. When sure of the spot, he sheered abruptly in to shore, and after listening in vain for any sounds betokening danger, he landed and glided up the bank after the coveted rifle.

It was harder to find than he thought, and several min-

utes were spent in groping around in the dark, before his hand touched the weapon. It had been overlooked by the Indians in their excitement.

Grasping the weapon, Caribou Zip turned toward the boat, when a sharp exclamation met his ears. It came from the direction of the canoe, and Graham knew that Kalne never uttered that deep, guttural note.

But before he could make a move, there came a sharp swanging sound, closely followed by a shrill, horrible yell of agony—a yell, wild and unearthly, that filled the forest with its blood-curdling echoes.

For a moment the young scout stood as if petrified, but then Kalne's warning signal greeted him, and he leaped down the bank, stumbling over the still quivering body of an Indian as he entered the canoe.

There was no time to lose. The angry shouts of Indians came up the lake shore. Hasty footsteps were heard in the forest beyond. Doubtless these were comrades of the savage who had fallen by Kalne's arrow. He had fairly stumbled upon the canoe, while gliding along the shore. Bending over, he must have recognized Kalne, since he called out her name. Without pausing for thought, the Indian girl bent Thayendanegea's bow, sending the barbed arrow deep into the red-man's brain.

Caribou Zip grasped the paddle and sent the bark from shore with the rapidity of thought, just as the Indians reached the bank above. These braves either caught a glimpse of the fugitives, or else were guided by the sound of the paddle, for a volley of arrows was sent hissing through the air, falling close around the fugitives, two of them even striking the canoe, but fortunately no damage was done.

The young scout did not relax his efforts until far beyond range, and then turned the canoe toward the island on which the company of outcasts rendezvoused. Haps and mishaps had succeeded each other so rapidly during that night, that he was growing reckless. Besides it was now fairly midnight, and any further delay might prove fatal to Thayendanegea and his hopes of rescuing Cecile.

Under his strong arms the canoe was not long in nearing

the island, and then pausing, Caribou Zip listened intently. All was still and quiet upon the island. Nothing could be seen of any camp-fire, for the scout had paused between the island and main land, and the same fear struck him that had troubled Brant, before the chief sighted the fires — might not the outcasts have deserted the spot since dark.

With this thought Caribou Zip cautiously uttered the agreed upon signal; the long, tremulous cry of the loon. All was still. No answering signal came. A strange, disforeboding filled the young scout's heart. He scarce knew what to think.

Again and again he uttered the signal, each time with increased clearness and force. Then his heart gave a wild throb. Over the lake floated an answering signal, low and tremulous, yet with a peculiar musical cadence. And yet — could Thayendanegea have forgotten? It was a loon cry, true enough; but not abruptly broken — instead the notes died gradually away like a far distant echo. How could Caribou Zip be certain that it came from the direction of the island? Still, the chief might have grown tired of waiting, and stealing a canoe, may have started in quest of his brother and loved one.

"Listen — the chief can not be in two places at the same time," quietly uttered Kalne, as Caribou Zip dipped his paddle into the water, turning toward the point from whence he believed the signal to have proceeded.

A second cry came from out the darkness, this time from a point between the couple and land. This signal was the correct one, being abruptly terminated, as though the loon had been frightened from its resting-place.

"That is the chief — we can join him in time to give these rascals below the slip," eagerly muttered Caribou Zip, plying his paddle with a will.

In a few moments he caught sight of a shadowy canoe directly in front, and could see that it contained one man. What a leap his heart gave then! He believed Brant had failed in his object.

Then he gave a start and stared at the canoe in open mouthed astonishment. Instead of one figure, he now distinguished *four*, faint and indistinct through the gloom. The

canoe was now turned broadside toward him—when first sighted it had been bow on, thus throwing the occupants in a line.

A guttural exclamation told Caribou that the persons in the canoe had caught sight of him, and had sheered aside in surprise. It told him too, that these were enemies—since they were Indians.

The encounter was so sudden and unexpected that Graham dropped his paddle, catching up his rifle and firing without pausing to weigh the consequences. Yet perhaps 'twas the wisest thing he could have done, for had he endeavored to flee, the Indians must have speedily overhauled him, and taken at a disadvantage the scout would have fallen an easy victim.

At the same moment Kalne discharged an arrow, and a shrill yell from the canoe told that at least one of the missiles had wrought out the mission of death.

Dropping his rifle, Caribou Zip seized the paddle and drove the canoe forward with all the strength he was master of. The Indians, taken completely by surprise and thoroughly confused by the death of their comrades, had not time to avoid the blow. Before they could use their paddles, the canoe struck their boat, fairly in the center, crushing in the frail side like so much pasteboard, casting the survivors into the lake. With a dextrous sweep of the paddle, Graham turned aside and the next moment his canoe vanished in the darkness.

Pausing for a moment, he leaned forward and felt of the bow. It seemed firm—there was no leak. The shock did not seem to have injured it in the least.

While thus occupied, Caribou Zip could not help giving a start of surprise and awe. Where all had been so still and silent but a moment before, all was now confusion and uproar. Then, he had seemed the only living being astir in the night, while now the lake seemed covered.

The discomfited trio were floundering in the water, yelling and screeching, not yet having recovered from the surprise. From down the lake came shrill, expectant whoops, answered back from the land. From the island sounded the alarm, as the outcasts forgot their habitual caution on being roused

from their drunken repose beside the camp-fires. Every thing was in confusion. Caribou Zip felt much like the boy who knocked at the hornets' nest, just to see if the inhabitants were at home. And like that inquisitive lad, Caribou Zip scarcely knew which way to turn.

A yell came from the island, loud, clear, ringing like the notes of a bugle. The young scout quickly lifted his head, his eyes flashing. Kalne exclaimed :

'The chief—'tis *his* war-cry!'

"Right, girl—'tis Brant's yell. Give him your signal, Kalne; that will be surer than any other. 'Twill guide him to us, as the doe's bleat lures the buck!"

Soft and musical, yet clear and distinct, the call of the Indian girl soared over the lake, and as Caribou Zip paddled swiftly forward, he heard the eager reply, or thought he distinguished it, amidst the other signals that came from the Indians, who were cautiously closing in, as though uncertain what force they might be called upon to encounter.

The island loomed up before the young scout, but no sign of Thayendanega met his gaze. And then, with a wild chorus of yells, the entire force of the outcasts darted around the lower point of the island, paddling their overloaded canoes with frantic energy.

When Thayendanega leaped into the canoe with Cecile, and pushed off from the island, the outcasts, with one accord, broke for their boats, and in the confusion, never noticing how badly they leaked, pushed off to round the island, hoping to overtake the bold adventurer. But the chief had done his work well.

Scarcely had the point been rounded, and while Caribou Zip was still staring at them the foremost canoe gave a sudden lurch, and filling, sank beneath its living freight. As though this was a signal, the other canoes followed suit, only one lasting long enough for its occupants to drive it ashore before it sunk. And the astonished shouts and oaths of the outcasts, who so unexpectedly found themselves struggling for life in the water, weighted down with clothes and weapons, were added to the rest of that infernal chorus.

"That's the chief's work," chuckled Graham, gleefully, as he realized what had occurred. "Nothing escapes him—

he sees every thing beforehand and is prepared for it. But *where* can he be now? Listen! hear those imps yelp! My hair feels uneasy—”

“See—a canoe!” whispered Kalne, pointing to the right, where an almost imperceptible shadow seemed slowly gliding through the gloom.

“Give your signal again—if an enemy, I can slip the canoe aside in time I guess,” muttered Graham.

Kalne obeyed, and the answer came swiftly, as the phantom canoe darted alongside them. It contained Thayendanegea and Cecile!

It was a curious meeting, seemingly cold and reserved, after such a parting, but the situation was not one that admitted any thing else. The little party were completely surrounded by enemies thirsting for their blood. An instant's unnecessary delay might prove fatal. Truly, it was no time for lovers' rhapsodies.

“Let Kalne and white flower lie down in the canoes,” hastily muttered Thayendanegea. “We will throw dust in the eyes of our enemies, but squaws do not go on the war-trail.”

“You take the lead, chief—I'll follow. Your brain's worth two of mine,” candidly added Caribou Zip.

Brant made no reply, but seeing that the women had followed his directions, he urged his canoe rapidly toward the lower end of the island, as though intending to pass directly over the place where the outcasts' boats had filled and sunk, though from the yells that the Indians still uttered it was plain that they were hastening to the same spot. Yet Thayendanegea was not acting without due forethought. By this move he hoped to cheat any eyes that might be upon them, since it would only seem natural that the fugitives should flee *from* such a spot rather than toward it.

As the two canoes darted over the spot, that occupied by Brant and Cecile struck against one of the overturned boats, with a slight jar. There was a slight splashing in the water, and a half-stifled exclamation, that attracted Caribou Zip's attention, causing him to peer keenly through the gloom at the object. Then, with a fierce, grating curse, he raised his paddle and dealt a quick blow with its edge. A muffled

cry followed, then a floundering noise as the fugitives glided past.

Caribou Zip had recognized the pale, terrified face of Jean Blanc, who was clinging to the half-sunken canoe, unable to swim. Despite the threatened danger, he half-resolved to pause long enough to give the renegade his just reward, and did deal him a severe blow, before following Thayendanegea.

The two scouts paddled on, exerting every muscle to the utmost, though nothing save the faint ripple of the wave behind betrayed their progress, so deftly were the paddles handled.

All behind them was still. The Indians had ceased their unearthly screechings, plainly telling they had recovered from their momentary confusion, and were now working earnestly to retrieve their lost ground. But the scouts cared little for this, now. With a tolerable start, a fair course and several hours of darkness to cover their flight, they held that escape was almost assured.

After a few moments, Caribou Zip drew alongside Thayendanegea, and cautiously proposed a change. The chief quietly assented, and then the lovers were paired off, feeling no little satisfaction at the change.

But before two miles had been passed, a cloud came over their spirits. Thayendanegea said that his canoe was leaking rapidly, and that the bark of the bow was gradually yielding more and more as the water trickled through. Kalne was already busy bailing it out, but that could not answer long.

"We must land, then," gloomily observed Caribou Zip. "This boat is not large enough to hold four."

"You can press on and take the white flower to the settlement. Kalne and I will take to the forest," observed the chief, with the coolness of a person proposing a walk down Broadway.

"I say no! Chief, you risked your life to free me from those villains—if Zip deserted you now, I should hate him forever!" interposed Cecile, with more energy than prudence.

"She says right, chief. We'll stick together, come what

may. Or do you take this canoe, with the women, and I'll mend that in time to overtake you," added Caribou Zip.

How this friendly dispute would have been decided, is hard to tell, had not the signals of the Indians at that moment sounded, telling the fugitives that longer delay might be fatal, since the enemy seemed to be coming that way.

"We'll stop at the first island and mend the boat there," decided Brant, resuming his paddle.

Side by side the canoes glided forward, and as they had already passed the second island, the scouts kept a close lookout, as but one more lay within reasonable distance. At length this was sighted, and the canoes run under the long drooping vines that hung from the stunted trees. Drawing the canoe upon land, the scouts carefully examined the break by feeling, of course, since eyesight availed them but little in that gloom.

CHAPTER X.

FOX AND GEESIE.

SIKAHOS the outcast was in the one canoe that managed to reach the island before filling, and both he and his braves saved their muskets from a wetting. He had scarcely gotten fairly ashore when he heard the cry of Jean Blanc as Caribou Zip struck him with the paddle's edge. This cry, queerly enough, reminded Sikahos that White Fox was unable to swim, and after a moment's hesitation, the outcast laid aside his weapons and entering the water, swam vigorously toward the spot from whence had come the despairing cry. He was none too soon. Half stunned, choking with the water that would flow into his mouth as he gasped for breath, Jean Blanc had struggled desperately to regain the overturned canoe from which he had been driven, but in vain. His efforts grew weaker and fainter, his breath came in quick, burning gasps, his brain seemed on fire, so wildly did it throb, so madly whirl.

Sikahos clatched Jean Blanc by the long hair, just as the

drowning wretch was sinking beneath the surface, and then struck out strongly for the island. At the touch of a friendly hand, Jean Blanc partly revived, and flinging out his arms, he clutched the outcast chief with a death-gripe, struggling frantically to pull himself out of the water.

Had Sikahos lost his coolness for a moment, they both would have been drowned beyond all doubt, but the crafty old warrior had faced death too often to be unsettled at a fresh peril, and clenching his bony fists he dashed them repeatedly into the face of the renegade, with all the strength he could summon. And this strong medicine took prompt effect, too. Stunned and bewildered, Jean Blanc ceased his struggles, hanging to the outcast chief like one dead, though his fingers were closed in a grip that nothing could loosen.

With a stifled grunt, Sikahos resumed his paddling toward the island, which he soon reached, and then, after securing his weapons, he carried the White Fox to the camp-fire, kneeling beside the whisky keg. After a strong pull himself, Sikahos forced open the renegade's tightly-clenched teeth and succeeded in pouring a quantity of the liquor down his throat.

The effect was soon perceptible. The rigid muscles relaxed, the fingers unclosed, and then the renegade opened his eyes, staring vacantly around. Grunting with satisfaction, Sikahos deserted his patient for the whisky-keg.

Naturally the reader will look upon the grizzled renegade as a hero—a brave, devoted friend who would risk his life rather than desert a comrade in distress. But the fact is, Jean Blanc had made grand promises to Sikahos, and the outcast resolved that White Fox should live until these pledges were kept, especially as he did not know where the Canadian kept his *cache*.

Had it been otherwise, Sikahos would have said with the immortal Rip—"Mrs. Van Winkle, I'll go home und dink aboud dot!"

During this time, the band of outcasts had been puzzling their brains over the strange events that had succeeded each other so rapidly, but without making much sense out of the tangle. They only knew that somebody had stolen away their fair captive, had runed their canoes and given them a

complete ducking, which occurred so suddenly that nearly all of their fire-arms had been lost in the lake. In fine, so excited and confused were they, that never a thought did they give to the Indian yells they had heard, nor once consider what would be the result were their camp-fires observed. They seemed to forget that they were Ishmaelites.

All but Sikahos. His crafty brain was busily at work, despite the strong draughts of whisky that slid down his well-seasoned gullet. Was it an inspiration that caused him to seize upon the heavily-breathing renegade and carry him further from the fire, where the deep shadows covered his movements? At any rate this *was* his move.

The outcasts approached their camp-fire, and the sight of the keg containing whisky seemed to interest them. The lake water was cold—whisky was warm, when applied internally, in sufficient quantities. Such at least seemed to be their belief, and the gourd passed so rapidly between the keg and their mouths that Sikahos, from his covert, could not restrain a grunt of anger at their hoggish propensities for swilling, and only with the greatest effort of will kept himself from leaping forward to the rescue—of his beloved fire-water.

Fortunately for himself that he did not break cover just then, for an interference came without his aid. His well-trained ear caught the sound of a cautious footfall, and shrinking back, Sikahos distinguished a number of phantom-like figures stealing up from the lower end of the island.

That they were enemies he doubted not, and even opened his lips to give the warning-cry that would put his men upon their guard; but the lips closed, the cry was not uttered. He could see that his braves were almost totally unarmed. They could not make a successful stand against a foe any thing equal in numbers. And then the *cache*—twenty shares were better than one.

Lifting Jean Blanc from the ground, Sikahos stole noiselessly away from the camp, until he dared go no further lest the enemy should hear his footsteps. He paused, waiting for the attack. Under cover of its uproar and confusion, he could manage to escape, especially as the renegade now gave signs of returning consciousness.

He had not to wait long. The Ottawas had recognized the band of outcasts, and were eager to blot them from the earth and thus settle all old scores. A deadly volley of bullets and arrows wrought sad havoc, and then an impetuous charge finished the tragedy. There was little fighting. It was a massacre, over almost as soon as commenced.

Yet it lasted long enough for Sikahos. He would not trust Blanc to walk, though that worthy was sufficiently recovered to fully realize the peril that threatened, but bore him down to where the canoes rested, placing him in one of the largest. Stepping in, Sikahos seized a paddle, giving Jean Blanc the thongs of the other canoes to hold, and then pushed off upon the lake. It was a heavy task for one paddle, but the outcast chief was equal to the occasion, and before the massacre was ended, he had lost sight of the island. A grim smile curved his thin lips as he heard the loud yells that told him the Ottawas had discovered their loss, and then he motioned Blanc to cast the canoes loose. He was nearly a mile from the island. There was little danger of the Ottawas recovering their canoes, at least in time to injure his plans.

Paddling leisurely along, Sikahos addressed Jean Blanc in a peculiar tone, telling him of the risks he had run in order to preserve his brother from death. The renegade fidgeted about uneasily, but replied :

“ I am very grateful, chief, and will bear your friendship in mind. But let us wait until we are in a safer place than this—we are surrounded by enemies.”

“ Sikahos does not fear when he has the White Fox to protect him. The Ottawas will run and hide their heads with fear when they hear his war-cry. Sikahos can see no danger while his brother is near. This is a good place to talk in. No one can creep near to hear what White Fox says when he speaks of his big *cache*.”

Jean Blanc turned pale at these words, and one hand mechanically sought his belt. But it found not the knife he sought and the fear gripped his heart still more fiercely. He knew what was before him. In a drunken spell he had told the chief that expecting the fall of Michilimackinac, he had converted most of his valuables into gold, which he had

buried, together with goods and weapons, in a safe spot. He knew what was in the mind of the outcast, and felt not only that his hoardings, but his very life was in danger. Still he managed to utter, in a tolerably steady tone :

"Your words are good, chief, but I can't find the spot myself, unless I have daylight to guide me. Let us land and wait upon shore until day. Then I will show you my *cache* and we will divide all it contains."

"The *cache* then is in the forest?" quietly added Sikahos

"Yes—near where the big, dark man built his lodge," eagerly replied Jean, feeling sure that the chief had fallen into his trap. But he was mistaken.

"A fox is cunning, but Sikahos has trapped many—he is no fool. White Fox talks with a crooked tongue. His *cache* is upon the island, and not in the forest," stoutly retorted the outcast chief, laying aside his paddle.

"I don't lie—it is in the forest!" desperately.

"My brother talks straight in his sleep. *Then* he told Sikahos how to find the *cache*. Perhaps White Fox does not want to help his brother dig up the things. If not, let him wait here until I come back."

"I don't—understand you," faltered Jean Blanc, as he saw the chief pick up his rifle from the bottom of the boat.

"Listen!" and the sharp double click told Jean that the rifle was at full cock. "Does White Fox understand *now*?"

"You mean to murder me!" gasped the coward.

"Not if White Fox leads the way to his *cache*. I can find it, but not unless I search close. It will be less trouble when my brother points it out."

"But you won't—you'll give me—"

"Your life and your scalp—that is enough!" sternly cried Sikahos, suddenly casting aside his mask of mocking politeness. "Talk quick—will you lead the way to the *cache*, or shall I take the life of a dog?"

"Don't shoot—you shall have all," groaned Jean Blanc, clutching the paddle, and using it tremblingly.

CHAPTER XI.

THROUGH THE TOILS.

CARIBOU ZIP and Thayendanegea, on examining the canoe, found it more seriously hurt than they at first deemed possible. The entire bow had been bruised with the severe blow received in running the Ottawas' canoe down, and the strained fibers of bark had been giving way ever since. It could be mended, but that would require time—and daylight was now so near at hand; two hours more and the lake would be lighted up with the rosy dawn.

Still, as nothing else offered, the brother scouts set themselves to work patching the fractured canoe. They dared not light a fire, lest it should betray them to their enemies, the Ottawas or the outcasts.

While working, the brothers had caught the sounds of firearms and yelling, up the lake, and puzzled over it a good deal. Little did they imagine how fortune was favoring them in the gloom; that their bitterest enemies were aiding them, even while longing, thirsting for their hearts' blood.

The two scouts were working steadily, when a low signal came to their ears, from the covert where lay the women. It was from Kalne's lips, and it told of danger.

In breathless silence the scouts listened. The regular dipping of a paddle met their ears. Could it be that the Indians suspected their anticipated prey of having taken refuge here?

"We'll make it lively for 'em, anyhow," muttered Caribou Zip, handling his rifle, a little nervously; not through fear for himself, but he was thinking of Cecile, just then.

"No—you must not burn powder. Only a fool tells his foe where to strike. The arrow is silent, but it bites with a sharp tooth," quietly replied Thayendanegea.

No more words passed between the scouts, for the unseen canoe now came so close that they feared being overheard. Thayendanegea was not a little puzzled. He could only

hear one paddle at work, and yet the canoe boldly approached as though manned by those who felt no fear. Would an Indian act in this manner if he thought his enemies had sought refuge upon the island? And at that moment a question and answer passed between the unseen canoes, distinctly audible to the ambushed scouts.

"It's the renegade—White Fox!" muttered Caribou Zip.

"And Sikahos, the outcast. Good! we will take their scalps," quietly added Joseph Brant.

"Hist! listen to what the dirty varlets are talking about," whispered Caribou Zip, eagerly, bending forward.

"This is the island where my brother has his *cache*?" the voice of old Sickahos was heard asking. "Tell me where to land; at the nearest point, so the canoe will be handy to receive the goods."

"Right before you, there," replied Jean Blanc, in a sullen, but thoroughly cowed tone. "The *cache* is just up there among the second row of trees. But the vines are thick and tangling—give me back my knife, and I will go clear the trail."

"The trail that Sikahos would follow to the Spirit Land? White Fox has a smooth tongue, but I would be a fool to give him back his teeth. No, we will go together, and unless you walk straight—see! Sikahos will have another scalp at his girdle!"

Caribou Zip cautiously touched Brant upon the shoulder, as if to insure his attention. But Thayendanegea had heard every word, and thoroughly comprehended the situation. Fortune was again befriending them.

The renegade and outcast landed only a few steps above the place where the scouts were crouching in ambush and stepped ashore. Sikahos firmly grasping Jean Blanc by the shoulder, as though fearing the renegade would try to give him the slip. But thoroughly cowed, Blanc had had no such thought, for he felt the sharp blade of the outcast chief significantly tickling his side, and knew that at his first attempt to escape, the weapon would be relentlessly driven home.

The *cache* is here—beneath this tree," muttered Blanc.

"Kindle a fire—the leaves will shut it out from the lake—

quick!" huskily muttered Sikahos, his voice trembling with avarice.

The two scouts as they cautiously crept nearer, could hear the clinking noise of flint and steel, and then caught sight of a glowing spark that the renegade's breath quickly formed to a tiny blaze. And then, while Sikahos stood over him with drawn knife, Jean Blanc opened the *cache*. A bitter groan broke from his lips as he reluctantly lifted the oil-skin cover that protected the treasures from damp, when the earth was removed. It was like tearing his heart out by the roots.

Sikahos bent over the *cache* as if to assure himself that Jean Blanc had not played him false. And then with unerring aim and deadly force his keen knife rose and fell, and the White Fox dropped across the *cache* with a feeble death-gurgle, the knife-point rankling in his heart.

So sudden and unexpected was this tragedy, that Caribou Zip could not entirely repress the cry of surprise that rose to his lips. The sound met the outcast's ear, and he rose erect, glaring around him like a wild beast at bay, the fallen torch faintly lighting up the scene.

Caribou Zip started back as a sharp *twang* sounded close beside him, and then he saw Sikahos stagger back, a barbed arrow quivering feather-deep in his broad scar-covered chest. So sudden was the death-blow, that only a stifled cry broke from the Indian's lips as he sunk down upon the body of his murdered comrade. A convulsive shudder, and then all was over. Sikahos the outcast chief was dead!

"It is only the scalp of a dog, but his canoe is good," quietly observed Thayendanegea, arising to his feet.

"You were right, chief—the varlet heard me, and might have made us trouble," added Caribou Zip, stepping forward and moving the bodies from the *cache*.

A little cry of astonishment broke from his lips as he lifted one of the skin pouches. Its weight, as well as the musical clink, told him what the contents were. No wonder that Jean Blanc was so reluctant to reveal his *cache*. The hoarding of ten years' trading—or swindling—among the Indians were in those pouches—nearly twenty thousand dollars in coin.

The money, together with such articles, weapons and

trinkets, as the scouts fancied would be of worth or service to them, were removed to the canoe in which Sikahos and the renegade had arrived, and then the little party departed from the island, paddling rapidly to make up for lost time. When daylight came, they ran into a small creek, and securely concealed themselves.

That day passed by without alarm, and when the shades of night descended over the lake, the fugitives once more resumed their long journey. But it is needless to trace this flight step by step, though on two different occasions they had narrow escapes from prowling bands of Indians, from whom, however, they managed to escape unscathed.

A week of night traveling brought them to Detroit, which they managed to enter, though it was still besieged.

Then, Cecile was united to Caribou Zip, her scruples being overcome by his persuasive tongue.

The brother scouts played a manful part in the thrilling events that render this leaf of our history so interesting, and Providence seemed to shield them, since they passed through it unharmed.

Thayendanegea was wedded to Kalne, and when the siege was raised, the loving quartette departed for their own homes.

Of Brant's after life, let history speak. The friendship between him and Caribou Zip was broken only by death, though during the struggle for Independence, they fought upon opposite sides.

THE END.

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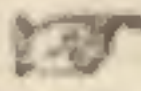
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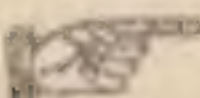
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